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REPORTER
ISSUE 22 • APRIL 2017

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Abbey College scoops top NCS prize

National Citizen Service (NCS) has awarded 'Champion School' status to the Abbey College, Ramsey, following their increased intake of students completing the NCS flagship youth programme.

The status has been given to the Abbey College and five other institutions in the Cambridgeshire area for excellence in promoting the programme and recruiting young people to take part over the last academic year.

NCS is a four week programme for 16 and 17 year olds which takes place during school holidays. The programme involves teenagers meeting other local young people from a range of backgrounds, living independently, and developing new skills whilst learning more about their communities and how they can make a difference through social action projects.

Participants spend up to two weeks away from home with all meals and activities covered. The first week is spent at an outward bound facility participating in activities such as abseiling, water rafting and canoeing. The second week teens live away from home, typically at local university halls of residence, learning how to be self-sufficient, developing new skills and finding out more about the needs of their local community.

There are a number of ways in which schools can work with their local

UnLtd AWARD WINNER

NCS provider to raise the profile of the programme to students and parents, ranging from delivering an assembly to students to attending careers events, parents' evenings and delivering sessions to tutor groups. All are free of charge.

Staff at Abbey College cite the markedly positive effect that participation in NCS programmes has on both young people and their wider institutions. Andy Christoforou, headteacher at Abbey College, said: "We are delighted to be a 'champion school' for the NCS as we believe in giving our students an excellent education and providing the best opportunities for the children in our community. Our students love their time with the NCS and come back from the summer schools with a host of new skills and brimming with confidence. We look forward to working more with the NCS to make sure even more of our students get involved with the programme and are subsequently able to experience the benefits it offers."

Education Secretary Justine Greening also commented on the awards as a whole, saying: "It's really fantastic to see that so many pupils have already benefitted from the wide range of programmes provided by National Citizen Service. I want to congratulate all the 'champion schools' and thank them for their hard work and commitment helping young people across the country gain vital skills that will help them get on in life and fulfil their potential."

Other schools awarded in the Cambridgeshire area are:

- Stanground Academy
- Swavesey Village College
- Sir John Fisher
- Thomas Deacon Academy
- The Voyager Academy

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RAMSEY IN THE SPRING!

IT'S TIME!

Ramsey's clock is finally back up and running, with a shining new clockface replacing the holes that visitors to the town centre have come to expect. Hopefully, this is the last repair needed this year!

We are very sorry to announce the passing of former Town Councillor Ian Walker, who passed away earlier this month. Mr Walker was a dedicated public servant, long-time Ramsey Forty-Foot campaigner and active member of the Ramsey Rotary Club. The funeral is to be held early in April full obituary will be following in the May edition.

Have you tried the waffles at Milkshake Junction? if not, check page 3 for more...

3522 **Amount of meters squared that will be resurfaced during the roadworks in Bury in the first week of April. See more on page 22**

ITS A **GOOD** MONTH FOR

FOOD & DRINK

New items on local menus and a spree of celebratory and award dinners marked last month

ITS A **BAD** MONTH FOR

THE BUDGET

Self-employed workers in the area welcomed the news that NI increases were scrapped

Have your say at the local HUSTINGS

As elections for the new position of Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority will be held this May, hustings events are taking place across Cambridgeshire and even online. Here is when and where to get involved.

Sawston Mayoral Husting
1 April 2017
Sawston Free Church, 7:30pm

Cambridge Network Hustings
5 April 2017
Cambridge Union, 5:30pm

Ely Cathedral Business Group
6 April 2017
Ely Cathedral, Chapter House 6:30pm

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL 2017

1st **Official 2017 opening**
Ramsey Rural Museum

2nd **Quiz Night**
Bury Village Hall

12th **Hopping Hares**
Wildlife Trust Countryside Centre

28th **Beer Festival**
Ramsey Golf Club

29th **Arts Festival Quiz Night**
Bury Village Hall

29th **Beer Festival**
Ramsey Golf Club

30th **Spring Vintage and Unique Wedding Fayre**
The 1940's Camp

For more information, please visit: discoverramsey.co.uk/events

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COVERING LOCAL NEWS SERVING LOCAL PEOPLE

The Ramsey & Warboys Reporter is an independent newspaper with no ties or associations with any larger publishers or organisations.
Each month, we bring you the best selection of news, views and what's on in the Ramsey area - written and produced locally and delivered FREE to your door.

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Milkshake Junction toasts waffle success

After days of speculation following a creative marketing campaign by unique local café Milkshake Junction, it was announced last month that they would begin Waffle Saturdays, serving a wide array of waffle, syrup and ice cream combos.

The move was first announced two days before the first official Waffle Saturday, after growing speculation in the town was fuelled by a countdown in the shop windows, which alluded to a change but did not specify exactly what the move would be. Claire, proprietor of Milkshake Junction, commented that she was thrilled that both the campaign and the new addition to the menu had met with such lively convsersation and approval in the town.

"We just love them", she explained, when asked what had given her the idea to launch Waffle Saturdays, adding "We love them and wanted to share that with everyone else".

As with most of Milkshake Junction's innovations, the idea is designed not only to attract Ramsey residents but also those further afield. "Hopefully, we are bringing something else that is different into Ramsey. Again we are hoping to attract people into Ramsey, so it's really just so we can offer something else for Ramsey and something else for the shop", said Claire, noting that aside from Peterborough there was no-one else in the local area who served such food.

The waffles, which are served with the customer's choice of ice cream and syrup, were met with strong approval on the day, with most weekend shoppers nipping in to sample the new treat.

"Everybody that has tasted them this morning has been amazed with them", said Claire, "so thats good, and we're not even an hour into the tasting yet!"

Milkshake Junction is far from finishing improving, with many ideas including potential expansion plans still being bandied around by Claire and her team, so as ever we are left watching this unique Ramsey space.

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DOG CAFE OPEN

Volunteers from the Ramsey Phoenix project successfully launched a dog café on Tuesday March 21st, with around thirty dogs in attendance throughout the day

The Dogs Meet, which is hosted at Ramsey Cricket Club, will be open every Tuesday from 10am for residents and their canine companions to meet, talk and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

The idea stemmed from a recent course on animal care run by the Phoneix Project, which included a talk from Chris Kent, founder of the similar K9 Project in Ely, which caters for disabled and elderly members of the community who are dog owners. Chris established the K9 Project in 2008, working alongside dogs with vulnerable or disadvantaged children, teenagers and adults. Along with her team she has worked with hundreds of children and teenagers, supported adults into volunteering and employment, helped the world be a kinder place for many dogs and their own.

It was her inspiration that caught the imagination of the course-members. Alison Seery, manager of the Phoenix Project, described how the idea came about.

"Last year, the phoenix project was funded to work with hobby subjects of people who were looking for work or who wanted to upskill, and one of the topics we covered was animals. In that course, we talked to Woodgreen, the RSPCA, Cromwell Vets, and one of the people we talked to was Chris Kent, who is from the K9 project in Ely. Chris runs a cafe which you can take your dogs to - this really inspired the people on our course and they were desperate to set one up."

Chris, who was herself present at the event, was surprised and elated by the early success of the café, with eager residents filling the space within the cricket club and spilling out onto the patio area. She spoke of the important community benefits of such a site, particularly for those who might

otherwise have trouble communicating, saying "You're never alone if you've got a dog. You walk down the street and people talk to you; no-one ever remembers your name, which if you are a bit shy and want to stay anonymous, you've got the dog to talk about to stroke, to look at, so they just take away all the inhibitors that we sometimes have about communicating with other people"

"The one in Ely that we have been running has been running for three years now, and it's gone through alot of changes in its history, but at the moment it is probably one of the few places where we have adults with metal health problems, young people with special needs, people with learning difficulties, wheelchair users, adults with some pretty substantial learning difficulties which come and help us out as much as they can, and everybody comes together. You don't have to tick a box."

Also present on the day was Ramsey's Deputy Mayor (and owner of a young puppy) Councillor Doug McIlwayne, who officially cut the doggie cake and proclaimed the café open. An avid dog lover, he spoke of the benefits to the animals as well as the community, commenting: "It's fantastic to see so many people at an event where dogs can come and socialise. Too many dogs these days don't get to play with other dogs, and then they get aggressive and so on. Dogs have a bad name, so it is very nice to see so many different breeds here day, all working well with each other."

He also noted the ideal location, thanking Steve Buddle and the Ramsey Cricket Club for allowing the Project to utilise their venue, saying "Its right in the heart of Ramsey, so people can just wander over, have a coffee, bring their dog, socialise and then carry on!"

The Project, which runs courses based around hobby activities in order to teach essential business skills to long-term unemployed residents, successfully bid for their second year of LEP funding in order to found and promote the café, which is run by volunteer applicants to the Phoenix Project's courses.

Alison also thanked the club, and praised the volunteers for their hard work and dedication, putting the skills learned at the Phoneix courses to good use in setting up the café. She said "Ive had alot of sleepless nights and alot of panic, but the team have worked phenomenally hard, they've done the advertising, they've done all the shopping, cleaned up, they've talked to Steve Buddle and the Ramsey Cricket Club about being here and they have organised it all, and I've just been along getting a few things done, and they should be very, very proud of their first day here, it has been incredible.

Unfortunately, the project remains at risk, with LEP funding running out. Alison remains optimistic despite the cuts, saying "we will have to look at extra funding that we can a. keep the dog cafe going and b. all the other things which incorporate the phoenix projects, including Jobsearch and all the courses that we run."

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The Magpas helicopter landed in the playing field on Mill Lane, Ramsey during the afternoon of Wednesday, 15th March.

An elderly lady in the nearby flats was taken ill and there was no ambulance or paramedic available, so a Magpas Doctor and Paramedic were called. An Ambulance arrived later.

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Picture shows from left to right - Kath Loukes- member, Linda Harness 2016 Ladies Captain, Jacquie Richardson Ladies County President. Amy Brown of Snowmountain Estates, owners of Old Nene Golf Club, Michelle Henderson from Parkinson's UK, Manager Lisa Carroll and Mike Ambrose Seniors Captain

Parkinson's UK benefits from Captain's fundraising efforts at Old Nene Gold club

Last year Linda Harness and her husband Colin were Captain and Ladies Captain at Old Nene Golf Club, near Ramsey. During their year as Captains they raised money for their nominated charity which was Parkinson's UK, mainly because Linda's sister Charon Dennis from Doncaster has been diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's.

Their efforts realised the sum of £1,463.60 which they handed to Michelle Henderson, Regional Fundraiser from Parkinson's UK at the beginning of last month.

Linda said, "I would like to thank everyone who contributed throughout the year. Also I would like to wish this year's Captain Martin Seery and Ladies Captain Lesley Armstrong well in their year and good luck with their fundraising.

Every hour, someone in the UK is told they have Parkinson's. It affects 130,000 people in the UK - which is around 1 in 500 of the population.

Parkinson's is a degenerative neurological condition, for which there currently is no cure. The main symptoms of the condition are tremor, slowness of movement and rigidity.

Parkinson's UK is the UK's leading charity supporting those with the condition. Its mission is to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's through cutting edge research, information, support and campaigning.

Michelle Henderson, Regional Fundraiser said "We are so thankful to Linda Harness for supporting Parkinson's UK during her year as Ladies Captain at Old Nene Golf & Country Club and donating an incredible £1436.60. We are so grateful for the time and effort she has dedicated to raising funds and awareness. I'd also like to express my thanks to all who supported Linda and contributed towards this total. To have raised this sum is a great achievement and we hope Linda and her friends at the club can be really proud to know that this donation will help make a real difference. Without support and donations our work would not be possible."

ITS TIME FOR ANOTHER HERITAGE DAY

Following successes last year, April will see the first Heritage Sunday of 2017, complete with the vintage bus rides and brand new locations.

On April 2nd, "A Journey through Time" in Ramsey will take you to 9 heritage sites for free on the now traditional vintage bus, which whisks you from place to place leaving the library on the hour.

You can search for the "Rammies" at the sites, see a film of the Great Fen Spitfire excavation at the 1940's Camp and visit our medieval, georgian and victorian heritage at the Abbey Gatehouse, Lady Chapel, Booths Hill, Abbey House, Walled Kitchen Garden and Mortuary Chapels, while enjoying the food and craft fair at the Ramsey Rural Museum

This year, you will also be able to take a trip all the way up to the Old Nene Golf and Country Club where they have some medieval themed children's activities for the day.

The Heritage Sundays are organised by the Promoting Ramsey Project, who are also responsible for the 'Discover Ramsey' branding and website. For more information, visit discoverramsey.co.uk.

ON LINE

Talented Local wows judges at TeenStar auditions!

Ella Hudson from Somersham has been given the big thumbs up by judges at the TeenStar auditions. Along with other impressive acts, Ella Hudson has made it through to the Regional Finals of the UK's only singing and dancing competition exclusively for teens and pre-teens, and will now be performing in a live showcase in the competition.

TeenStar is an exciting national singing and dancing competition searching for the UK's best teen and pre-teen singers, singer/songwriters, rappers, dancers and dance groups of all genres and styles. TeenStar is organised and run by Future Music, the company behind the discovery of artists such as Jacob Banks, Warner Music's Birdy and Union J's Jaymi Hensley.

More talent

For the first time, ever, the competition has now opened its doors to dancers too! With even more talent entering the competition, the TeenStar competition is an exciting opportunity for teens and pre-teens across the UK.

Ella Hudson is one contestant who has evidently caught the judge's eye, and who is now in the running to follow in the footsteps of previous winners Luke Friend and Emily Middlemas, as well as competing for a place in the Grand Final. Thousands of hopefuls entered TeenStar nationwide and hundreds of auditionees queued patiently on the day for their turn to impress the judges.

Head-to-head

Those who made it through the audition stage will now take part in a live Regional head-to-head battle alongside the best talent in their area. They'll be performing in front of hundreds of audience members and a professional judging panel to win a place at the National Grand Final.

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NEW VENUE FOR RAMSEY CRAFTERS
FROM APRIL 2017

Ramsey Crafters are moving to Ramsey Cricket Club and extending their hours. They're still going to meet every other Monday but the events will start at 12.00 noon and finish at 3.00pm. This will enable us to have a lunch break and have the opportunity to socialise.

So popular

We'd like to thank the Scout Association for their hospitality at the Scout Hall but we've become so popular, we've out grown the venue. Therefore, from Monday,
24th April we will be meeting at Ramsey Cricket Club, Cricketfield Lane and our first event on the calendar is a demonstration from two of the flower arrangers from Thomas a Becket Church in Ramsey. Hilary and Pauline will be showing us how to make interesting flower arrangements for our homes using flowers from a supermarket and household items as containers.

Our programme for the rest of the year includes a demonstration of calligraphy, making bead jewellery, needle felting and ribbon embroidery amongst other things.

Ramsey Crafters was started by five people who attended a craft course organised by GAP Learning. Craftworks was a course designed to teach them about colour and design, how to decide what products they could make and sell and how to identify their customers. They enjoyed it so much they decided to set up Ramsey Crafters and started making craft items to sell at local fairs.

The group is open to everyone and you don't need any prior experience of crafting or any particular skills.

Please get in touch with either Joan or Dawn for more information 01487 710851 / 814772.

Vara hosts Food and Drink Day at the Commons

Shailesh Vara MP organised a very successful Cambridgeshire Food and Drink event which took place today in the House of Commons. The event promoted produce from around the County including ales, cider, bread, cakes, meat products and olive oils.

The aim of the event was to support and promote local producers so that they could showcase some of their products in Parliament. As well as local MPs supporting the event it also attracted support from various other Parliamentarians from around the country as well as their staff.

Following the event Mr Vara said:
"Cambridgeshire has some great food and drink producers and it was good that they were able to come to Parliament and showcase their products. This was a fantastic opportunity to display some of the best Cambridgeshire has to offer and it was certainly a very successful and well attended event. I am grateful to my fellow local MPs as well as all the local producers who helped to make it such a memorable event"

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HETAS

Ladies Probus Club Presidents Dinner

President Diana Hyde welcomed The Club's guests, Chris Wick, President of Ramsey Rotary and Eric Garnham, Men's Probus President who were accompanied by their wives Carol and Noreen, at Ramsey Golf Club on 24th February. Richard Shotbolt entertained the fifty diners with tunes from his electronic organ.

The aim of Probus is to provide for its members regular meetings and offers companionship, mutual support and recreation. It is non-political and non-sectarian with a limit of fifty members. Occasionally they support various charities, and meet every month, sometimes with a speaker. It is open to professional and business women aged 50 and over who have fully or partially retired. Ramsey also has a Men's Probus Club who also meet monthly..

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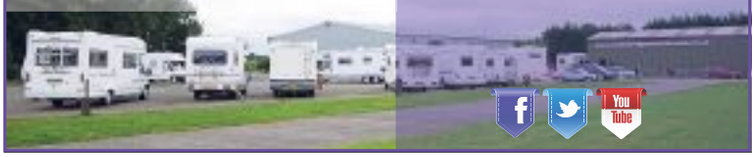

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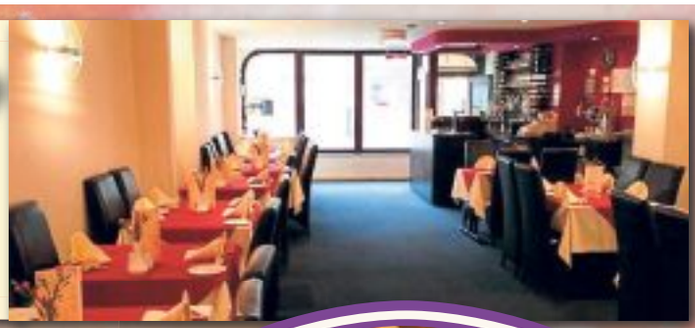

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BENWICK BANTER

Down Memory Lane with Janet Fountain

The Boot and Slipper

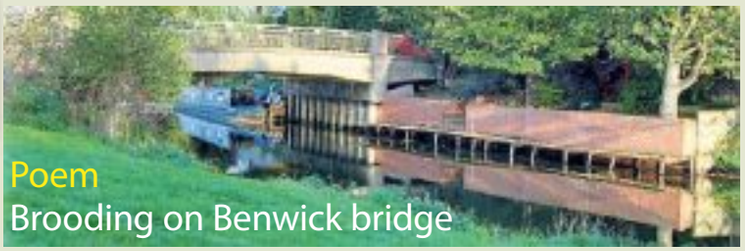
In a previous article I mentioned the pubs in Benwick - seven in the High Street and one at Copalder. I believe the oldest one was The Boot and Slipper. It has also been referred to as The Boot and Shoe, The Benwick Hotel and The Top House. In 1890 there was a report by the Rev Hardy Wood in the Parish magazine when a Cambridge student praised the hospitality of the landlady, a Mrs Wing.

Mrs. Pearson became the next tenant followed by my grandparents, William and Teresa Chaplin in 1902. They came from Northampton to take the tenancy as the pub was owned by the Northampton Brewery Company. My two uncles and my father were born there. My father told me it was an old coaching inn and horses were stabled there overnight. As a boy he had to clean the visitor's shoes and leave them outside the bedroom doors ready for the morning.

Underground cellar

In 1934 a new underground cellar was installed due to increased business. This was the only pub with a wine and spirit licence. Mine hosts at that time were Mr and Mrs Stanley Williamson. I remember the pub in the 1940's and 1950's. There was a club room upstairs where meetings, sales and social events as well as whist drives were held and downstairs besides the licensed rooms there was a small room where the doctor from Doddington held his surgery. Patients had to wait outside until the previous patient came out.

The pub prospered with the usual darts and domino teams and a good bowls green until 1975. The tenants at that time were Hannah and Harold Granger. It was a sad day for the village when it had to be demolished. The Benwick Hotel had had its day!



Poem
Brooding on Benwick bridge

This wonderful poem from an unknown Benwick resident, leaning on the bridge over the old River Nene was sent in by Jill Hindle who believes it was probably written at the turn of the 20th Century.

'Twas on a Sunday afternoon, he leaned on the bridge to rest,
For he was a squire of 80 years, and memories on him pressed.
The stream below, the church before, each seemed to speak to him.
And he listened intent, to the message they sent,
Although his sight was dim.

The church spoke first, so calm and clear in a way as never before,
Old friend! You and I are about the same age, for our years now number four score.
And all through that time, I've been pointing above, in rain, storm and shine, with my steeple,
To a home that will last, and never break, prepared by the lord, for his people.

On Sundays and Holy Days my bell calls "Came and Pray",
Some hear the call, they rise and come, but others stay away.
And this I note that those who thus, refresh both mind and soul,
Find in themselves both joy and peace, and for their lives a goal.

And then how hard I try to peal, a blessing on the marriage,
Of happy youth and maid, as they go forth to join their carriage.
In tones of promise, hope and rest, my bell peals forth her sorrow,
When sad ones come to lay to rest their loved one till "that morrow".

I've noticed through these many years, some folks look at my face,
It's only just to know the time – that seems my only place.
But others find, beside a clock and weather-cock above,
An altar, in a home of Peace – a place of hope and love.

Sometimes they call me-Mother Church- a name I love to hear,
Of all the creatures God has made, the children are most dear,
In waters of Holy Font, they rise to their new birth,
And start their course in higher things, and not in things of earth.

List! Hear the children's voices, as lustily they sing,
Their closing hymn at Sunday School, before they all take wing.
Lest I forget – one word of praise, for work both good and true,
Is for the children's teachers, from parents me and you.

At thought of tea, the old man turned to wend his way down street,
When 'neath the bridge he heard a voice, so rippling and so weet,
"My dear old friend" said Father Nene, "Just hold on to the line".
I heard the tale of Mother Church, and now just list to mine.

I journey quite a distance bit before I reach the sea,
And through a larger place than this, - but this twixt you and me.
Of all the places I pass through, my choice is your own village,
And so do all I can to drain the fenlands under tillage.

And how I love on frozen breast to hear the skaters gay,
The winters now give little chance for sportsmen such as they,
So I must flow, and be content to carry boat and barge,
With cargo – taties, beet and coal, for whate'ar men like to charge.

You're getting tired but ere I end, I must make one complaint,
That dredger tears my sides and bed, until I almost faint.
In day of yore, this work was done by Benwick's sturdy men,
A better job I never saw, right up and down the fen.

Goodbye, old friend, do not forget your stream draws nigh the sea,
Through earthly thing, your course has been, but soon a change will be,
So watch and pray, that when there sounds to you the Masters Voice,
"You rise at once and follow Him, and evermore rejoice".

ON LINE

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Dates for your Diary

20th of march to 21st June

General Dates

Beer Festival - April 28th/29th
Ramsey Golf and Bowls Club

Spring Vintage and Unique Wedding Fair – April 30th
The Camp

Yaxley Festival – May 12th, 13th, 14th
Yaxley Town

Ramsey Rural Museum Official 2017 Opening
April 1st – 2pm to 5pm

Food and Craft Fair
2nd April – 11am to 4pm

Model T Ford Club
3rd June – Times TBC
Westood Caravan Club
16th/18th June – Times TBC

Great Fen Project Quiz Night
1st April
Bury Village Hall

Hopping Hares – 12th April
The Wildlife Trust Countryside Centre

Wildlife Watch – 22nd April
Lady's Wood in Upwood

Wildlife Watch – 20th May
The Wildlife Trust Countryside Centre

The Rothschild Way Challenge – 24th June
Wicken Fen

Oneleisure

One Leisure Easter Activities

OLD SCHOOL SPORTS DAY (5 to 11 YEARS)
Thursday 6th April 1.00pm to 2.00pm

RUN AROUND GAMES (4 TO 8 YEARS)
Wednesday 12th April 2.00pm to 3.00pm

NERF WARS (5 to 10 YEARS)
Tuesday 4th April, and Tuesday 11th April 2.00pm to 3.00pm

DECORATE AN EASTER EGG, AND EASTER EGG HUNT (4 to 9 YEARS)
Wednesday 5th April 2.00pm to 3.00pm

COURTS 4 KIDS (UNDER 16 YEARS)
Weekdays 3rd to 17th April 9.00am to 5.00pm

TURBO CRICKET (6 to 12 YEARS)
Thursday 13th April 10.00am to 11.00am

MINI MOVERS (3 to 5 YEARS)
Thursday 13th April 1.00pm to 2.00pm

BASKETBALL (6 to 12 YEARS)
Thursday 13th April 2.00pm to 3.00pm

HOCKEY (6 to 12 YEARS)
Thursday 13th April 3.00pm to 4.00pm

How Ramsey can help your spring chores

Spring is a time to begin anew, not just for nature but for us too! So its out with the old curtains and onwards towards summer. Here are just a couple of ways organisations in the local area can help you this spring

Unfortunately that time has come again. Spring cleaning is a tradition that is, according to Wikipedia, stems from the ancient Jewish practice of thoroughly cleansing the home in anticipation of the springtime festival of Passover. however, in northern Europe, the custom is an essentially practical task due to our wet climates. During the 19th century, prior to the advent of the vacuum cleaner, March was often the best time for dusting because it was getting warm enough to open windows and doors (but not warm enough for insects to be a problem), and the high winds could carry the dust out of the house. This time of year is also when coal furnaces wouldn't run and you could wash all the soot from the walls and furniture left by the furnace

So, in the modern post-vaccum world, how do we tackle our spring clean. Well, if you live in this area, you don't have to! Dream Clean offer a spring clean cleaning service that makes your home spotless and saves you the hassle of this annual chore.

Accoring to their website, Dream Clean just love to spring clean! Their page on the issue reads as follows "It's what we do and we are very, very good at it. We know that you have better things to do with your life so we make sure that we work your spring clean around your schedule. We make sure that everything that you want doing gets done and we can do everything that needs doing – from dusting to window cleaning to carpet cleaning and beyond". So why not save yourself the hassle this year and get Dream Clean in to do this much loathed springtime ritual.

Onto happier climbs now, as spring brings with it a while host of gardening delights and demons. With the winter flowers beginning to fade, new plants are beginning to rise up and grow back. Perhaps you are looking to rejuvenate an older bed, or provide something a little different to liven up the view from your windows. Either way, I's probably time for a trip to the garden centre. While the nearest of these lies out towards St Ives, Huntingdon and Brampton, there are still local establishments where you can find your seeds. If fresh-cut flowers are more your style, why not nip into Wild Frost on the Great Whyte and spruce up the home with some of their unique bouquets. Wild Frost also provide potted plants, ideal for bringing into the home and even the garden!

There are also a number of tree surgeons working in the local area, if you've decided that this spring it's time to take to task an arboreal issue that's been at the back of your mind for years. Alternatively, grab a pair of shears and get into the garden yourself, taking on that pesky overgrown bush or hedge as the weather begin to turn towards the sunny!

HOP ON THE BANDWAGON OF SUCCESS

NEW SERVICES FROM THE REPORTER...

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The Mayor of Where, Exactly?

The inaugural Cambridgeshire and Peterborough mayoral election will be held on 4 May 2017 to elect the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, who will go on to lead the band new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

However, according to a recent survey many residents in Huntingdonshire are still unclear about what exactly this new tier of local government will provide, and what they will be voting for in just over one month's time.

We've boiled down all the waffle into a few simple FAQ's in this guide to the mayoral elections.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is this all about?

Through a process known as 'devolution', the Cameron government announced during last year's Autumn Budget Statement that further powers would be given by the government to a series of elected mayors in four areas.

Originally, a mayorship was proposed for Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, but this was rejected by local government in those areas, with a smaller area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough later accepted at a national level.

While local councils will continue to deliver services for residents as they do currently, major decisions about travel, infrastructure and housing will now be made locally by the newly formed Combined Authority who will based here in our region and who understand the real issues we face.

Who are the Combined Authority?

The Combined Authority is made up of representatives from eight organisations. These are Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Peterborough City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP).

The Authority will be led by a Mayor, who will be elected by you on Thursday 4th May.

What powers will the mayor have?

The Government and the Secretary of State have been very clear that an elected Mayor must chair the combined authority to secure millions of additional funding.

A mayor will give the Combined Authority a focal point and will be the contact for Central Government, working hard to ensure the organisation works closely with them to deliver the best results for local people.

- By having a Combined Authority and a Mayor in place, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will receive:
- £170 million to deliver new homes over a five-year period in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire which includes affordable, rented and shared ownership housing
- £20million a year funding over 30 years to boost growth in the region
- responsibility for chairing a review of 16+ skills provision in the area
- authority to co-design a new National Work and Health programme with Central Government aimed at those with a health condition or disability and the very long-term unemployed

The new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayor could also exercise powers and functions devolved from Central Government including:

- responsibility for a multi-year devolved transport budget
- responsibility for an identified key route network of local authority roads
- powers over strategic planning, the responsibility to create a non-statutory spatial framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and to develop with Government a Land Commission

How does the supplementary voting system work?

The Supplementary Vote (SV) is a voting system used primarily for the election of a single candidate to a position of high importance.

Under SV, each voter ranks from among the list of candidates a first and a second preference. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes on the first count all but the two leading candidates are eliminated and the second preferences of those who voted for eliminated candidates are redistributed to help determine a winner.

This system is used in several countries in presidential elections, and is the current system used to elect the Mayor of London.

Who are the candidates?

James Palmer

Conservative

East Cambs District Council Leader, County Councillor, Businessman

Public and policy statements:

- Pro-Business (12% business growth in East Cambs)
- A focused, lean and cost efficient mayoral office
- A focus on homebuilding for lower paid people
- For a rail link in Wisbech and a university in Peterborough
- Innovative solutions for Cambridge's congestion problem

Paul Bullen

United Kingdom Independence Party

UKIP County Council Group Leader, former parliamentary candidate , businessman

Public and policy statements:

- Opposed to "big government" – has suggested scrapping County Council
- Believes local homes should be prioritised or local people
- Open to upgrading public transport, including rural bus routes
- review the possible removal of city bus lanes or traffic lights
- promised "extremely transparent" mayoral office

Rod Cantrill

Liberal Democrat

Cambridge City Councillor, former parliamentary candidate, financial consultant

Public and policy statements:

- Opposes hard Brexit, is campaigning for access to single market
- Pledged to be a "listening mayor who will put sustainability first
- Opposes LEP voting rights on new Combined Authority
- Highlighted jobs, transport infrastructure and affordable homes in announcement speech
- Will be basing mayoral policies on survey of residents

Kevin Price

Labour Party

Cambridge City Councillor, Executive Councillor for Housing, former university porter

Public and policy statements:

- Wants to "put social justice at the heart of the devolution deal"
- Favours setting a local housing allowance rate
- Campaigning for "improving transport and local democracy"
- Consistently mentions a need for more and better affordable housing
- Believes the mayor needs to be able to negotiate with government without being constrained

Julie Howell

Green Party

Joint Green Party Co-ordinator, Parish Councillor, Confidence Coach

Public and policy statements:

- Highlights parish council experience
- Opposes proposed busway in West Fields
- Offering "fresh perspectives and a challenge to the establishment"
- Disability rights campaigner
- Committed to building social housing

Peter Dawe

Independent

Entrepreneur, Media owner

Public and policy statements

- Service-rich accessible housing, not dispersed travel to everything
- Prioritisation on transport network improvements
- Extra council tax for better road maintenance
- High technological investment e.g. electric cards, living aids, smart housing
- Business specialisms by location

Stephen Goldspink

English Democrats

Former Peterborough city councillor (deputy leader)

- Spend money on starter homes or tailored housing for elderly
- Opposes higher diesel taxes
- Looking to seek resident views on transport policy
- against "large, faceless authorities including any regional authorities"
- Would invite and welcome Donald Trump to visit Cambridgeshire

Adela Costello announced as County Council Candidate

CURRENT MAYOR OF RAMSEY TO STAND FOR CONSERVATIVES IN UPCOMING ELECTION

Adela Costello worked at City College Peterborough but then in 1999 she purchased Head Start and was the Head teacher for 17 years. The cynical amongst us might argue that a career spent with toddlers prepares one well for council politics, and perhaps this is the case, as she takes her first step into true political campaigning this month as conservative candidate for the newly re-districted Ramsey and Bury Ward of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Meeting me in the sitting room of her house in Ramsey Forty-Foot, the village in which she has lived for forty years, Adela seemed ready for taking the next step in a political career she never envisioned, despite being close to completing her second term as Mayor of Ramsey.

She was first elected to the town council in 2003. Following the sudden death of her eldest son, she came into conflict with the councillors several times regarding various issues about the cemetery. "Eventually", she tells me, "I had to put my money where my mouth was, stood for the council and was elected."

Now, she has thrown her hat into the ring again out of some necessity – the last minute withdrawal of Councillor Michael Tew due to illness prompted the Conservatives to find a qualified replacement, and Adela was their first call. As we talked, she paid tribute to Cllr Tew, saying "I've known Michael Tew for the past eight years, when he was elected in Ramsey under the UKIP umbrella, but that didn't matter to me because Michael Tew is a really nice person who has always had the interests of the people of Ramsey, Bury and Warboys at heart. He has worked really hard for his constituents"

This was not her first run-in with politics, nor her first success. As part of her long-time association with the Ramsey Forty-Foot Village Association, she successfully led a campaign for free school transport for pupils to what was then the Abbey and Ailwyn Schools. As a result, free bus passes are still available for students today, but the issue has left its mark and Adela is making road safety her top priority in her campaign, telling me "We don't have the footfall because we don't get the development in Ramsey, we don't have an adequate road system either. Our roads are atrocious, that is going to be one of my key issues."

Adela in Bury with outgoing County Councillor Michael Tew, who was forced to pull out of the election due to illness.

"A lot of our roads have been designated down by the County from B to C status, and those are the roads like Stocking Fen Road and Wood Lane, major roads into and out of Ramsey and also major roads for lorries and HGVs. Because they are being designed to C Status it means they don't have cats eyes, road markings are not a priority, so if our road markings disappear because of wear and tear, Cambridgeshire highways isn't going to put us on the list.

She also cites her personal experience in the town, which includes tackling the dangers of the roads for many years. "I drove one night back from a meeting of the trustees of Jones Court", she tells me, "and I had to drive back in the fog. Fortunately, because I have been driving up Stocking Fen Road for the last thirty-three odd years, I know the road, but could I see the markings? No, A driver of an HGV lorry, potentially from another country, could be very dangerous"

As for the kind of councillor she would be, she admits there is still a great deal to learn, but is ready and excited for the challenge, seeing the ability to listen to others and take expert advice a priority when governing.

"I need to learn, I need to listen, which I think I do pretty well, and I need to represent Ramsey and make Ramsey and Bury, especially now Bury is in the ward, make them more of a focus for the county". This prompts a discussion about Ramsey which Adela notes is constantly side-lined in favour of the larger market towns, something she is keen to rectify. "I think Ramsey is treated as the poor relation - I see developments taking place in Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots, God-manchester, and what happens in Ramsey?"

As for what kind of councillor she would wish to be, Adela argues that co-operation and communication lie at the heart of her philosophy. "I believe in diplomacy and negotiation as the best way to resolve issues, whether locally or at Shire Hall. However, I am prepared to confront issues strongly when necessary. I am used to working hard to benefit residents and, if elected, I will be doing the same on the County Council."

Leaving after our chat, I note we didn't talk about the challenges to come, about the local strength of her opposition, although Adela noted many times that campaigning was a new experience for her. Her opponent, while not formally announced at the time of print, is likely to be incumbent Councillor Peter Reeve MBE, a long-time cog in the political machinery of Ramsey. This fight could go down to the wire, and if anyone is looking for one to watch, this could well be the battle to pick.

CALL FOR VOTERS IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE TO REGISTER IN TIME FOR ELECTIONS THIS MAY

With local elections taking place in just a few weeks, voters in Huntingdonshire are being urged to make sure they are registered to vote and are able to take part on polling day, Thursday 4 May.

The call for voters to sign up comes as the Electoral Commission launches a national voter registration campaign to encourage as many people as possible to register ahead of elections taking place this year across the country.

Huntingdonshire District Council are now also reminding voters in Huntingdonshire that they need to register by the deadline of Thursday 13 April otherwise they won't be able to take part in the Cambridgeshire County Council elections.

For the first time, voters in Huntingdonshire will have the chance to elect a Combined Authority Mayor for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Voters in Huntingdonshire should look out for a booklet that will come through the post with information about the candidates standing for election.

Joanne Lancaster, Electoral Registration Officer for Huntingdonshire District Council, said: "Time is running out to make sure you can take part in elections this May, so I'd encourage everyone in Huntingdonshire to take action now if they're not already registered to vote. It's quick and easy to register, but after the deadline of 13 April, it will be too late."

Emma Hartley, Head of Campaigns at the Electoral Commission said: "Our research shows that young people, students and recent home movers are particularly less likely to be registered to vote. So if you have moved house recently, then make sure you're registered correctly. If you're not registered, you won't be able to have your say on issues that directly affect your day-to-day life in Huntingdonshire."

TO REGISTER TO VOTE, VISIT WWW.GOV.UK/REGISTER-TO-VOTE BEFORE THURSDAY 13 APRIL

RAMSEY ROTARY

Ramsey Rotary joined forces with Ramsey in Bloom to draw attention to their continued fight aganst the scourge of Polio, while thousands of youngsters took part in the Rotary Competitons.

Planters beside the Clock Tower in Ramsey

Past Rotary members garden Bury

Plant pots in a Rotary members garden

Purple 4 Polio

For over 30 years, Rotary and its members have been committed to fighting to eradicate polio across the world. The amount of polio-endemic countries has dropped from 125 to just three, with over 2.5 billion children receiving vaccinations thanks to the help of Rotary.

With eradication now closer than ever, Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland's latest campaign, Purple4Polio, was designed to unite communities to engage in activities as part of the final push to eradicate polio for good.

The campaign tied in with the 100 year anniversary of The Rotary Foundation, Rotary's own and only charity, which has played a key role in making polio eradication become close to a reality, along with hundreds of other projects both in Great Britain and Ireland and overseas.

A partnership between Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland and The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) allowed Rotary clubs to join forces with the RHS's community-based Bloom Groups and work in tandem to bring people together, transform public spaces to brighten up the local area and promote health and wellbeing by planting 6 million crocus corms.

Several months ago we highlighted in the Reporter the planting of 4000 crocus corms around Ramsey, Warboys and the surrounding villages. A selection of these sites is proof of the success of the planting exercise.

Bury Village Sign

Brian King, Geoff Blurton and Club President Chris Wick

Guest Evening

The Rotary Club of Ramsey held a 'Guests Evening' on 14th March at Ramsey Golf & Bowls Club to highlight what Rotary is all about. The evening organised by Rotarian Brian King was an ideal opportunity for guests to meet members, find out more about Rotary International and Ramsey Rotary Club in particular.

Two Rotary videos on the polio irradication programme were shown followed by and interesting talk by Immediate Past District Governor Geoff Blurton from Kettering Rotary Club. Geoff is a much-travelled man having worked overseas for the Salvation Army throughout most of his working life. The evening ended with musical entertainment from Geoff playing the piano according and singing his own composition of "The Rotary Club of Ramsey"

Rotary competitions for Schools

Thousands of youngsters take part every year in our youth competitions, which in most cases take the form of regional heats, followed by a national final. The majority are categorised into junior, intermediate and advanced age groups.

The competitions include, Young Chef, Youth Speaks, Young Musician, Young Photographer, Young Artist, Young Writer, Technology Tournament and Young Citizen.

The competitions are spread out between January and June and the current competitions being Young Writer, Young Photographer and Young Artist.

The theme for this years creative competitions is Reflections. Upwood School being very active with these competitions have submitted 30 children aged 5 to 6 years for Young Artist, 11 children aged 8 to 9 years for Young Writer and 2 entries for Young Photographer.

It has been a difficult operation for Rotary Club member to judge the competitions. The group winners will be forwarded to the District to be judged with other school winners.

Young Artist entries being judged by Club President Chris Wick and Rotary members

Rotary Vintage Fair

Ramsey Rotary is holding a Collectables, Vintage and Artisan Fair on Saturday 22nd April at The Camp, Wood Lane, Ramsey, between 9.30am and 3.00pm. Valuations of items by Stephen Drake of Willingham Auctions will take place between 12 noon and 3.00pm.

This new venture both for Rotary and Ramsey will provide something for every one. Make a note of the date. Anyone interested in having a stall please enquire by telephoning 01733 844536 0r 01487 711760.

Chocolate poisoning

We're sure you know (and we've mentioned before) that chocolate is poisonous for our pets. There's quite a few special occasions recently when chocolate is a popular gift (Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Easter coming up). Poisonings this time of year are more common so we thought we'd tell you more about it.

There are a few ingredients in chocolate that aren't good for our pets. The digestive systems of cats and dogs cannot cope with a high content of fats and sugars in their diets and it can contribute to a painful condition called pancreatitis. This is inflammation of the pancreas, the organ responsible for producing digestive enzymes and hormones such as insulin. Once a pet has had pancreatitis, they will often suffer bouts again in the future. It is treatable but can be fatal in some cases.

The main poisonous ingredient of chocolate you need to be aware of is a compound called theobromine which is similar to caffeine. It is a plant alkaloid which means it is naturally found in a plant, namely the cacao bean from which chocolate is derived. It is bitter tasting, so the more bitter the chocolate, the higher the theobromine content.

Like caffeine, it is a stimulant and is responsible for the famed lift some people get from eating chocolate. As a stimulant it affects the central nervous system, increases heart rate, dilates blood vessels and stimulates urine production. In the pet's body, all this adds up to serious consequences including an often lethal over-stimulation of the heart.

Why is chocolate so toxic to our pets and yet we can eat it with no ill effects?

It might surprise you to learn that theobromine can also be poisonous to people! It would just take a very large quantity to have a reaction (so don't panic, you can still safely eat chocolate). The difference between us and our pets is the digestive systems. Cats' and dogs' systems are not as efficient at metabolising (breaking down) theobromine and the process is much slower. This means our pets are far more sensitive to the compound.

Toxic levels

Like most poisons, effects are determined by a few factors. Theobromine toxicity levels is dependent on:

- Type of chocolate – dark chocolate has a higher theobromine content per 100g than milk chocolate.
- Quantity of chocolate – it goes without saying that the more chocolate consumed, the more theobromine that needs to be metabolized by the digestive system.
- Size of pet – it takes less theobromine to reach toxic levels in smaller pets.

Remember chocolate is also poisonous to cats, but cases are less common than with dogs.

Symptoms of toxicity include vomiting, diarrhoea, restlessness, excessive panting, muscle spasm and increased heart rate. Advanced symptoms include cardiac failure, seizures, weakness and coma. It can be deadly – even a small amount! Luckily fatalities are relatively rare (in comparison to the number of cases Vets see) thanks to awareness and prompt veterinary care.

How does the Vet treat a pet who has eaten chocolate?

There is no antidote to theobromine poisoning. Veterinary treatment is dependent on toxicity level and symptoms shown.

In serious cases, neurological (such as fitting) and heart symptoms are treated as a matter of urgency to stabilise the pet. If the chocolate has been eaten in the last hour, the Vet must try to minimise theobromine absorption. This is done by:

- Using a special drug to make the pet vomit – this expels any chocolate left in the stomach
- The pet is given activated charcoal which absorbs any theobromine in the intestines (gut)
- The pet is put on a drip to help to flush the toxin out of the body. The fluids also supports the body systems.

Unfortunately if it has been over an hour since the chocolate has been eaten, it is likely it has already passed through the digestive tract and the theobromine has already been absorbed into the bloodstream so there is very little point to making the pet vomit. Veterinary treatment would concentrate on giving supportive care and monitoring closely.

The prognosis is good and the majority of pets make a full recovery when given prompt veterinary treatment.

If you think your pet has eaten ANY quantity of chocolate, please seek immediate veterinary treatment. You can call Cromwell Vets 24/7 on 01487 814789.

Cromwell Vets
Over 100 years of care

"The most fantastic vets I have ever dealt with. I would trust no-one else with my dogs. Genuine people with hearts of gold!" Linda on facebook

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01487 814789
Mon-Fri: 9am - 6pm,
Wed LATE NIGHT until 8.30pm
Sat: 9am - 12.30pm

56 Green End Road, Sawtry, Cambs PE28 5UY
01487 800199
Mon-Fri: 9am - 6pm
Sat: 9am - 12.30pm

Our own 24hr Hospital - 01480 52222
in Huntingdon
(36 St Johns Street, PE29 3DG)

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St Neots (01480 216612),
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24hr Emergency Service 01480 52222
Based at our RCVS approved hospital in Huntingdon
www.cromwellvets.co.uk

The Golden Circle Tour Iceland is a must for any first time visitor. It lets you see Iceland's most iconic natural wonders and historical attractions.

The road loops from Reykjavík, the capital of Iceland, into the southern uplands of Iceland and back. The route can be covered in one day, either as an escorted coach tour, or by yourself, with your own hire car. This option gives you the freedom and flexibility to do your own thing and spend as long as you want at each site.

The 3 main highlights of the Golden Circle Tour Iceland are:

- Getting up close to an erupting hot spring at Geysir geothermal area
- The incredible power of Gullfoss Waterfall

The Golden Circle Tour Iceland takes you from Reykjavik city to Thingvellir National

Park, which is possibly the most important area in Iceland in terms of its history, culture, and geology. A UNESCO world heritage site, Thingvellir National Park is home to Iceland's largest natural lake and the place where the tectonic plates of North America and Eurasia split and drift apart.

Continue your journey to the Geysir geothermal area, home of "The Great Geysir" hot spring, which all other geysers are named after. Here you can see Strokkur hot spring blast out a column of super heated water, up to 20 metres, approx every 10 minutes.

At Gullfoss waterfall you can take a short walk down a pathway and get right up close to this powerful 2 tiered waterfall. Here thousands of tons of icy water thunder majestically down into a deep canyon.

Carrying on around your Golden Circle Tour Iceland you will come across Kerid volcanic crater, a crater lake in the area, known as Iceland's Western Volcanic Zone. Skálholt Cathedral, and the Nesjavellir and Hellisheiðarvirkjun geothermal power plants, before finishing back in Reykjavík.

The Golden Circle Tour Iceland is a wonderful opportunity to take some amazing photographs in the land of Ice and Fire.

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WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Plenty to look forward to in the Women's Institute section this month. A very enjoyable meeting of the Warboys WI, some traditional home-made cake and a look at the lighter side of WI with a Gary Barlow concer.

WARBOYS WI Report

Our monthly meeting in February was most enjoyable. Tony Greenstock and his wife Carol gave us a wonderful presentation about their holiday in China. All very professionally done and extremely interesting. This was followed by "tasters" of Chinese food , donated by our local Chinese Take-away. Most of our members dressed up specially for the occasion.

In March we were treated to a feast of colour from the tulip gardens in Kenkenhop, Holland. Our speaker was David Wilkinson who gave us a most enjoyable talk about the development and history of tulips as we know them today.

On May Day we shall be taking part in It's a Knock-Out on the sports field, in our case, to raise money for The Denman Appeal, which is the WI College.

Our February Lunch Club outing was to the Dolphin Hotel in St.Ives, but it was thwarted by a power cut, but even so we found an enjoyable alternative

We are looking forward, in the summer, to a theatre trip and continuing our special interest groups, crafts, lunch and games. A Summer Outing is planned; all we need is some summer sunshine.

The WI in Your Area

Huntingdon & Peterborough Federation of WIs represents over 1,800 members in 58 individual WIs throughout this area. There's always lots going on. Here is just a snippet of some of the things we've been up to in March. Other activities have included quizzes, Tunisian crochet, a visit to the WI Fair at Alexandra Palace and jigsaw racing!

International Women's Day

International Women's Day offered several opportunities to be out and about promoting the WI and our campaigns. It also led to conversations with representatives from other likeminded organisations. Our first event was 'Women and Education' held in Peterborough Town Hall, followed closely by an invitation from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office to attend 'Empowering Women' held at the Allia Business Centre at Peterborough Football Club.

During a Coffee Morning to mark International Women's Day members brought donations of sanitary products. These have been distributed to 'The Elms' and 'Refuge'. The Elms is a recently opened centre offering a dedicated service to all victims of sexual assault by providing a safe place to receive medical aftercare and support at Hinchingbrooke Hospital. A representative of 'Refuge' took the rest to several women's refuges locally.

Get Set Cook Supermarket Food Waste – Round Two!

Food Cycle asked us once again to join them and Westraven Big Local to help highlight the amount of perfectly good food that is potentially wasted by supermarkets on a daily basis. WI members took to the floor of Serpentine Green Shopping Centre in Peterborough in another round of 'Get Set Cook Supermarket Food Waste'. Delicious dishes were produced using food that supermarkets would normally have thrown away.

The Girls

On a lighter note 132 members from this area boarded coaches to London to see Gary Barlow and Tim Firths musical based on the film Calendar Girls. A great cast, fabulous music and a poignant story worked together to provide a great afternoon of entertainment. For those of you unfamiliar with this true story it recounts how a group of WI members in Yorkshire hit upon the idea of printing a calendar featuring members discreetly posing nude while engaged in traditional WI activities, such as baking and knitting, in order to raise funds for a local hospital. Lots of laughs and a few wobbly bottoms – well worth seeing!

Ramsey WI

PRINCE BAD, DAVID BOWIE GOOD

That was the message from Keith Rooney BA, MBA, MSWW.

He was referring to the Estate Planning of these two rich public figures. Prince didn't leave a will and only American lawyers will ultimately benefit, whereas Bowie's will, all 20 pages of it, was drawn up in such a way that his beneficiaries received their windfall within weeks.

Keith is a very good speaker, who with the aid of simple graphics took us through the complex world of Property Protection Trusts, Lasting Power of Attorney, and making a Will. After listening to Keith we all went home ready to tackle our finances.

HOMEMADE CAKE

Have you been to a Ramsey WI coffee morning yet? The next one is on Friday 7th April in Ramsey Community Hall from 10.00 till 12.00. Its tea or coffee and biscuits for just £1, that's biscuits plural not just one, and free refills. Lots and lots of homemade cake on offer at only 50 pence for a large slice of Strawberry and cream cake, coffee and walnut cake or even boiled fruit cake.

A raffle with at least 10 prizes and next month we have a variety of stalls selling everything from cards to jewellery. Come along and pick up a bargain or just indulge yourself.

For more information about the WI or to find a WI near you visit: **www.thewi.org.uk**

WI	Time & Date	Location
Abbey	2pm – 1st Thursday	Bury Village Hall
Holme	7.30pm – 1st Thursday	Holme Village Hall
Ramsey	7.30pm – 2nd Monday	Ramsey Community Centre
Ramsey St. Mary's	7.30pm – 3rd Wednesday	The Barn, Ashbeach School
Warboys	7.15pm – 2nd Wednesday	Warboys Parish Centre
Wistow	7.30pm – 2nd Wednesday	Wistow Village Hall

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MUSTO®
Is coming to Ramsey

Become an On-call Firefighter at Ramsey Fire Station

Ramsey Fire Station is looking for local residents to join its on-call firefighting crew to help protect the community it serves.

Here are some answers to some of the more common questions we get asked about becoming an on-call firefighter.

How will being a firefighter affect my day job?

Measures can be taken to ensure you are not called out before or during your working hours.

Do you have to be at the station all the time?

No, Ramsey firefighters are on-call and carry pagers with them when they are available to attend call outs. If you are not on-call you do not have to attend.

How many hours do I have to be available for?

This could be as little as 50 hours a week, which can be broken up into any size that suits both you and the Service. Being available for 50 hours does not mean you have to work 50 hours – it just means you need to be available to cover call-outs during that time period.

When do you need cover for?

We are always looking to recruit new staff to provide cover Monday to Friday day time & Evenings and also weekends.

How often do you train?

Once a week on a Monday evening for two hours 19:00 to 21:00.

Do I get holidays?

Yes, you get up to 38 days.

What if I'm not fit enough?

There are fitness standards you have to meet but they are achievable and you can get fit enough if you push yourself a little – you're probably half way there already.

What do on-call firefighters enjoy most about the job?

All our on-call firefighters enjoy learning new skills as well as the variety of jobs they get called to - which can include everything from a house fire to a road traffic accident or animal rescue. You'll also be part of a team of people, dedicated to keeping others safe.

What is special about Ramsey Fire Station?

The fire station in Ramsey is crewed only by On-Call Firefighters. These men and women provide cover during the day, night and weekends all year round. They all have other careers and with the support of their employers and families they in turn give their time to provide fire cover to their community. The firefighters in Ramsey bring with them a wealth of knowledge and skills, they provide a very important role within the community, from community support, fire awareness advice to the local schools and voluntary organisations such as the scouts and guides and support to local community events.

The fire station is on Great Whyte, it has one light rescue pump which is equipped to tackle most emergency calls from fires, road traffic collision, animal rescues and numerous other types of call outs. It also has one Water Carrier and the Co-Responding vehicle for medical calls.

Currently the station has a crew of 10 firefighters and is recruiting from within the community.

Watch Commander Tony Thacker said: "This job is rewarding; it can be hard work, you could be called out in the middle of the day during work or of a freezing cold night, you might only get a few hours' sleep on occasions, but think of how proud your family will be of you. Think about how proud you will be of yourself when you have saved someone's life and helped someone in your community in their time of need!" All emergency calls are different but to have that feeling when you come away from an incident to know you have helped and saved the life of someone and helped that person in your community is a positive feeling.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service will provide candidates with the training and support they need to help them succeed. It will also provide them with all the uniform and fire kit needed to do the job of firefighting in safe, controlled conditions. Candidates will get paid for their time from the moment they start training.

PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE TEAM AT RAMSEY AND BE A PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact any of the team at Ramsey on a Monday evening at the station, or log on to: www.cambsfire.gov.uk for more information.

Recruiting on-call firefighters at **Ramsey fire station**

Do you want the opportunity to work as part of a team, protecting your local community?

On-call firefighters are a vital part of today's fire and rescue service. They provide an efficient and effective service that gives emergency cover to your local community.

As an on-call firefighter you will carry a pager and when "on-call", remain within 5 minutes of the station to respond to emergency incidents as and when they happen.

We ask you to be available for call outs for at least 49 hours a week. This can be during or after work, in the evenings, weekends or at night when you're asleep.

You will receive an annual wage reflecting the time you commit, plus additional payments for attending drill nights and incidents.

We also offer:

- Paid holiday
- Pension
- Opportunities for progression
- An Employee Assistance Programme

Come along to meet the crew and learn more about the role at any of Ramsey's drill nights. Training is on Mondays 7pm and 9pm.

For further information call **01480 444500** or search **"Cambs on-call"**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Working together to improve community safety

CAN WE DO IT? Yes we can…fit a stairlift!

Don't fall for the hard sell says Tony Richardson

Are you visiting relations this Easter? If you're concerned that they're not getting upstairs safely and would like to enquire about a stairlift, then consider sending photographs of their stairs to Tony Richardson.

Green Stairlifts Limited are moving with the times and won't force an in-person visit on their customers by offering a photo quotation service. If you are looking for a quote you can simply send in digital images of the bottom, middle and top of your stairs and Tony will work out a price which is then backed up by a full technical survey to ensure the safety and quality of any work.

Adam, from the Reporter, interviewed Tony a few months ago and he said that "Easy, quality, reliable" are three words you know are true of Green Stairlifts Limited after he spent chatting with founder Tony Richardson.

Tony left his career as a Technical Surveyor behind for one simple reason: he couldn't stand to see people treated the way the salesmen from the national stairlift companies treated them. Going into business for himself fifteen years ago, he has stood by a simple principle that he holds to this day: no hard sales.

"I left because I didn't like their sales practices" says Tony. "My theory has been that I would treat every customer as I would want my mother to be treated". This principle has led to the founding of Green Stairlifts Limited, a company that prides itself on the quality of its environmentally friendly re-conditioned Stannah Stairlifts and its growing list of satisfied customers.

It's that easy

So, what do you need to know about stairlifts? Firstly, that they are a lot easier to fit than you might realise. One of Tony's issues as a surveyor was that most salesmen suck their teeth and make out that your stairs are tough, it's a big job that needs plenty of cash thrown at them and most of the time it simply isn't! "Many people think they can't have one and most time they can", says Tony. "It screws down to the staircase, so there's no damage to the property and we can put it on either side of the stairs."

No sales hassle!

"I don't even ring people back after giving them a quote. I do a quote and leave it with them. Most people really like that because the big companies will be on the phone all the time. I don't bother them at all. They can just give me a ring if the customer wants to go ahead.

At Green Stairlifts Limited we respect their personal privacy. We're a no pressure organisation, whereas if you respond to the national ads, your details may be sold to a third party and you get all the pushy sales. It's horrible."

Stay Green!

Green Stairlifts Limited is appropriately named and provides perfect commitment

to the philosophy behind supplying reconditioned machines. "I'm environmentally conscious", explains Tony. "I don't like to see them going to scrap. With a curved one, we will have to build a new rail every time but they can re-use the steel, which is good and the machines all come out with fresh batteries and are serviced." The reconditioned models are also around 40% cheaper than a new model and run for just as long, which Tony points out can be a real saving for someone on a pension.

The models also come without the extra cost and hassle that larger companies push their salesmen to achieve such as extended warranties. "I just won't sell them", says Tony, "My suppliers can easily get parts for our stairlifts and arrange an engineer to visit." Tony prides himself on the quality of the Stannah, stating that they very rarely go wrong and admits to being picky enough that he will only accept the very highest quality of workmanship.

Taking pride in the work

For Tony great satisfaction comes not from his sales but his customers who he can help stay in their homes. "A lot of people have got to the point where they are desperate", he says, "and it's a shame. I always wish people would contact me earlier, because I don't pressure anyone and I will always go and see them and won't charge anything for advice."

However, he does admit that it's a tough business at times. "Nobody buys a stairlift because they fancy one. A lot of people put it off until it's too late and perhaps they have a fall before it's fitted. It's mentally tricky". In order to combat this, he offers this advice to all potential customers – "As soon as you feel uncomfortable or unsafe on your stairs, give us a call, because we can take the danger out of the situation."

The sooner you install a stairlift, the better value it represents as you use it for longer.

It's easier than you think, you won't be hassled and you can get a simple quote with just a phone call. Even if you are just trying to weigh up your options, Tony can put your mind at ease and always tells it like it is. So why not give him a call? Check the advert for all the details.

Dear Tony
Thank you for your straight forward approach advising on our stairlift. So great, from just having to email a few pictures for a quote, a visit from you for a precise measure of our staircase. No prolonged sales talk as we experiences by one or two companies. My husband is pleased with our reconditioned stair lift fitted in March 2017 by a very helpful stairlift fitter. It is excellent to know that at times our stairlift is needed it is there to make like easier. *Thanking you and your team Kind regards J M (Mrs)*

Dear Mr Richardson
I am writing to you to thank you for the work you put into measuring my stairs for a stairlift. It was duly installed in July 2016 by two extremely able hard working men in just one morning. What particularly impresses me is the surpreme accuracy of your measurements. I was frequently measured for size and I can go up and down with literally about 2 inches to spare without hitting the beam on the side of the wall. I am full of admiration. Thank you so much and I send all good wishes for the year ahead.
Yours sincerely EG

Dear Tony
The stairlift was installed yesterday and I am already getting used to it and finding it very good. *Yours sincerely HM*

Dear Mr Richardson, Thank you for your excellent service. The stairlift is perfect. The fitter was also excellent too. A very nice man
Yours sincerely, Mr & Mrs A

Dear Tony, Mum is very pleased with her stairlift. She is "wizzing" about on it. It makes her life much safer. May have another customer for you soon. p.s. Very impressed with the fitter who moved the cabinet with me and helped us put electrics back for lamp. Please pass thanks on to him.
Mrs H

Dear Mr Richardson
Thank you for your letter. The stairlift fitter installed the equipment today. Thank you so much for your service and attention to detail, the fitter also did a fantastic job and is to be congratulated.
Mr B S

Green Stairlifts Limited

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THE OLD NENE
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

THERE'S THE GOLF COUR

Perched on the edge of Ramsey, the very wel and non-golfers alike. Discover there is far mor

Facing proudly out onto the nine-hole course is the brand-new clubhouse, which boasts a full bar and restaurant alongside three function rooms, just part of the picturesque welcome to the site. At the rear lies a newly renovated 12 bay floodlit driving range and putting green, while to either side one can find rentable lodges, a golfing shop, physiotherapy clinic and even, in Spring and Summer, the Ramsey Ravens Archery Club! All this without even exploring the fishing lake, which lies at the end of the course, and the attractive, peaceful lands surrounding the estate.

This month, we delve into the wonderful world of the Old Nene Golf and Country Club, to discover just how much this unique Ramsey establishment has to offer.

NINE-HOLE GOLF COURSE

First and foremost, the Old Nene is a golf club. Set in 88 scenic acres of beautiful Fenland, The Old Nene is a true parkland course which integrates tree lined fairways, a lake and even the River Nene as a part of its setting. Privately owned, the club is extremely friendly to members new and old, with visiting and pay-and-play players welcomed with open arms.

- Floodlit driving range
- Putting green
- Chipping area
- Trolley hire
- Buggy hire
- Course refreshments
- Pro Shop

Green Fees start from £8.00 - Mens' and Ladies' 7 day membership £553.95 per year

RESTAURANT & BAR

Merging the traditional golf club ethos with modern stylings, the bar and restaurant face out over the lake and out onto the course itself, tied together with a stunning veranda area which makes for an ideal relaxation space in the sun after a day out on the course.

- Scenic patio veranda
- Bi-folding doors with a panoramic view
- Plenty of natural light
- A fully licenced bar
- Full menu & specials
- Table service
- Barista coffee

The Old Nene Golf and Country Club, Muchwood Lane, Ramsey PE26 2XQ

RSE AND THEN SO MUCH MORE!

coming Old Nene Golf Club is an wonderful place for golfers re to this local establishment than you ever thought possible...

EVENTS & MEETINGS

Looking to book a room, be it for business or pleasure? The Old Nene has you covered with not only the full restaurant available to book but also two brand-new function rooms on the upper floors. The Lake View Room, comes complete with a private bar and a private balcony, while the Kiln Room is perfect for business meetings and presentations, and can be creatively reworked for your own purposes.

- Beautiful views over the golf course and Lake
- A private bar which can be open on request
- Wi-Fi available
- Disabled toilets
- Private Balcony
- Hot Drinks served in restaurant
- Buffet available on request

WEDDINGS & RECEPTIONS

The Old Nene also caters for that extra special occasion, with their 88 acre grounds and beautiful modern clubhouse the ideal setting for a fenland wedding. The venue is already receiving plaudits, having been featured on hitched.co.uk, and is continuing to offer their service with several more weddings booked in the near future.

- Veranda & private balcony
- Access to the grounds for photography
- Your choice of bars and function rooms
- 86 day guests
- 150 evening guests
- Accommodation lodges
- A selection of catering

FISHING

Blending the tradition golf club feel with the courtesy of a modern business, the Old Nene offers a plethora of additional services.
Why not try the fishing lake, which is set as part of the estate and open during daylight hours seven days a week! Between three and nine feet deep this treat is well stocked with several species.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

There is also an on site physotherapst, courtesy of Ramsey Physiotherapy, which offers fast access to specialist physiotherapists who can help you understand the root of your problem, including:

- Physiotherapy
- Sports and Clinical massage
- Private and Group Pilates sessions
- Acupuncture
- Moving & Handling Training
- Ergonomic Assessment

www.theoldnene.co.uk

Highways announce Surface Treatment works in Bury

Cambridgeshire County Council have announced another round of surface treatments for roads in the Bury area, with many resident surprised by the sudden appearance of signs advertising the fact in their area.

The works, which are expected to affect several roads in Bury during the first full week of April, are known as "surface dressing", which involves spraying the existing road surface with a coating of liquid bitumen, followed by a covering of stone chippings. These chippings are then rolled into the bitumen, followed by a sweep of the road to remove loose chippings.

Roads in Bury that will be affected are:

- Ringwood Close
- Buryfield
- High Meadow
- Woodfield Avenue
- Old Stable Walk
- Sunfield Walk

The Surface Treatment program is designed in a cost effective manner to form a cyclic route around the county, with other areas being treated in April including Fenstanton, St Ives and St Neots.

It is likely that this process will require roads to be closed, Information Leaflets about the processes and the probable impact of the works have been mailed to homes in the Burt Area. Advanced warning signs went out on Road Closure sites 14 days in advance and adjoining side roads will also have advanced signs notifying of Road Closure, or impending works which are likely to cause delays. Shortly before commencement of works, the supply chain will also carry out notification to properties on the road, and temporary No Parking signs will be displayed on-site.

Access to properties within the closed area will be maintained where possible but delays and disruption are likely; through traffic will be required to follow any signed diversion route. Business Open As Usual signs will be displayed where necessary.

An initial program of works is available, but all processes are weather dependent, and are therefore liable to change at little or very short notice. A daily whereabouts of works will be available on the CCC Website, and further information will be available via the County Council's Contact Centre or from the crew on-site.

A POTTED HISTORY

Looking back on eighteen years of Ramsey in Bloom, and looking forward to the future.

Across from the former mill denoting the start of Ramsey's Great Whyte is a small, unassuming plaque fitting surrounded by a floral tribute, marking the contributions of Wyvern and Sheila Staley Grace. The names may not mean much now, but to the members of Ramsey in Bloom, this marks the start of nearly two decades of work keeping the town in bloom!

As Andrew Stewart, current Chairman of Ramsey in Bloom assuredly informs me, many of the dates corresponding to the history have been lost to the annuls of time. All that is known for certain is that Wyvern and Sheila set about placing the now familiar wooden oak tubs around the town at some point before 1998, starting with just a few and eventually introducing over 50 into the town, each one packed with soil and planted with flowers. Before their deaths, they also brought up a boat and a cart, similarly filling them with flowers and displaying them around the town.

It is here, in 1998, that history begins to become clearer. After Wyvern's passing, the town council began to explore the floral displays, which by then had become a feature of the town, and took advice as to who would be responsible for their upkeep. A number of existing organisations were approached, but many declined for what Andrew describes as "various and very reasonable reasons".

Having nowhere else to turn, Phyllis Jackson formed the Ramsey in Bloom group, which because official with the sighing of its constitution in 2001. The group was then, and still is to this day, supported by individual donations and the Town council, which has taken an ongoing interest in its progress.

The Grace's legacy, in the tubs, cart and boat, live on to this day. The cart remains, although now serviced by others, and the boat has been replaced by a brick structure sponsored and supported by Burton Brothers Garage. The tubs you can see scattered around town, and despite problems with vandalism and theft around fifty-four are regularly tended by volunteers, schoolchildren and churches. These are planted twice a year by a team of volunteers, and Andrew is more than happy to drop of the bulbs and seeds at locations through Ramsey and its surrounding villages, describing himself as "an excellent dogsbody" as well as Chairman. This perfectly outlines the group philosophy, which is open and earnest, hard-working and not too serious.

Whilst not a registered charity, In Bloom are nonetheless a charitable service for Ramsey, and are required to buy flowers twice a year, replace tubs when necessary and pay HDC via Ramsey Town Council for public liability insurance.

Andrew also noted that new members are always welcome, as many of the group were now past retirement age. "We will always make room", said Andrew. "We are all volunteers and there aren't any expenses paid to us, we will continue to try and brighten up Ramsey and hope we can continue to retain the support of existing businesses and look for fresh support from new ones.

Follow this story in next month's exclusive feature, where we tale a behind the scenes look at Bloom in Action.

Parking delays cause outrage in town council

Ramsey councillors have increased pressure on County Council Highways officials to implement new parking regulations in the Town Centre, which have been repeatedly delayed despite plans having been approved over six months ago.

The plans, which were reported in this publication in September 2016, include increasing the parking limit on most of the roadside spaces in the Great Whyte and High Street areas to three hours, thus creating equality throughout the town which could then be enforced by the local constabulary.

The move is being supported by local businesses, many of whom blame the constant, all day parking for a lack of turnover at their establishments. Ali Sarica, who owns and operates the White Whale in Ramsey High Street, complained that "parking is affecting my business, because they use it as free parking all day. Everywhere else you go, they have got limits."

"I think, if they are going to support the businesses in the high street, there should be a limit on the parking" he later added.

Several councillors met with Ali and voiced their concern about the delays. Councillor Adela Costello explained that the fault lies largely with Cambridgeshire County Council, as the Town Council had not only approved plans but had already voted on releasing the funds to back the project. She noted "the hold-up is with the County Council. They had to reference the changes via advertising, they sent the wrong letter out initially, and its just generally been held up. This has been ongoing for 20 months now, and its just not good."

Councillor Ian Curtis, who has been a strong supporter of the project on the town council, expressed his frustrations, saying "It's just very frustrating, we just want to get this sorted. It's been going on for 20 months now and it's just not acceptable. Ramsey gets treated as a second-class town; if it was in Huntingdon or St Ives it would have been sorted by now, and that's what my frustration is. Ramsey just doesn't get the attention that the other market towns do."

He also drew attention to a lack of effort on behalf of Ramsey by current County Councillors, saying: "As far as I'm concerned, the County Councillor that we've got should be making sure that this is done. He is our representative on the County Council and he sits on the Town Council so he knows what is going on."

Councillor Peter Reeve MBE was able to confirm that an apology had been made to him by the Council, and that there was currently a two week timetable in place for delivery of the measures. He also pointed to the lengthy legislative process, challenges from various parties and cuts made to the County Council, which had affected the process, saying "The County Council has been under pressure to significant austerity measures forced upon them by the Conservative Government that have left key department short staffed".

Cllr Costello, who has made road safety and improvement a key focus of her campaign to be elected as County Councillor, also noted that Ramsey simply didn't have enough spaces to accommodate the influx of cars, saying "I think there should be more parking in Ramsey. We lost 26 spaces when the library was built, and that has an effect. The Mews Car Park isn't big enough, at times, to hold the number of cars that we would like to see in Ramsey. People now use their cars to go shopping and, obviously, you need a parking space. Putting a restriction of three hours on the majority of the parking spaces in Ramsey will make it fair and consistent".

At time of print, reports indicated that the Town Council has received notification from County officials that a highways officer may soon be dispatched to ascertain which signs would need to be updated

WARBOYS STORIES

WARBOYS SPRING CLEAN

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers and Parish Council staff who turned out on 3rd, 4th and 5th March to take part in the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean. Co-ordinated by Councillor Maggie Harlock, volunteers were out and about in the streets and verges of Warboys during some extremely wet conditions collecting a vast amount of rubbish. Councillor Mary Bucknell, Chair of Warboys Parish Council said 'Well done to all of the volunteers who helped over the weekend and ended up being soaked in the rain. It was great to see the variety of age groups and indeed whole families helping to tidy our village. The response was most heartening, certainly a wonderful example of community spirit. Please support those people who so generously gave up their time by not dropping litter or throwing it out of car windows, please continue this demonstration of pride in our village. We have 40 litter bins in the village that are emptied weekly so please use them or take your litter home.'

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BUSINESS

National **Minimum** Wage and National **Living** Wage

The difference between the National Living Wage and the Living Wage

The new National Living Wage is different from the Living Wage, which is an hourly rate of pay and updated annually. The Living Wage is set independently by the Living Wage Foundation and is calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK.

National Minimum Wage

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) is the minimum pay per hour most workers are entitled to by law. The rate will depend on a worker's age and if they are an apprentice.

The National Living Wage

The Government's National Living Wage was introduced on 1 April 2016 for all working people aged 25 and over, and is currently set at £7.20 per hour. In April 2017 it will go up to £7.50. The current National Minimum Wage for those under the age of 25 still applies.

Key points

- Most workers over school leaving age will be entitled to receive the NMW.
- The NMW /NLW rate is reviewed annually by the Low Pay Commission.
- HM Revenue & Customs (HRMC) can take employers to court for not paying the NMW/NLW.
- There are a number of exemptions to those who receive the NMW/NLW. These do not relate to the size of the business, sector, job or region.
- The compulsory National Living Wage is the national rate set for people aged 25 and over.

Rates of pay

It is important to note that these rates, which came into force 1 October 2016, apply to pay reference periods beginning on or after that date.

The rate will then change every April starting April 2017. The rates from 1 April 2017 will be:

- £7.50 per hour - 25 yrs old and over
- £7.05 per hour - 21-24 yrs old
- £5.60 per hour - 18-20 yrs old
- £4.05 per hour - 16-17 yrs old
- £3.50 for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over who are in the first year of apprenticeship.

There are a number of people who are not entitled to the NMW/NLW.

- Self-employed people.
- Volunteers or voluntary workers.
- Company directors.
- Family members, or people who live in the family home of the employer who undertake household tasks.

All other workers including pieceworkers, home workers, agency workers, commission workers, part-time workers and casual workers must receive at least the NMW.

Information taken from the ACAS website.

If you need HR advice in your business, do get in touch.

Dawn Cross - Face2faceHR
dawn.cross@face2facehr.com
01487 711959

MAXIMIZE VALUE **BEFORE SALE**

Selling a business at the right price and terms often takes a year or more. Owners who desire to sell their businesses should begin to maximize the value of their business at least two and preferably three or four years prior to the sale. Selling before you have to allows you to take a deliberate approach to what is probably the most important deal of your life. There are a number of methods to increase value within this time horizon and the increased payoff can be enormous relative to the company's current value. Some of these methods are discussed below.

Increase Profitability

Buyers tend to base their purchase offers on the most recent three or four years of earnings. A trend of increasing revenues and profits is the key to obtaining the best price. The reliability of earnings over a long period of time assures the buyer that it should pay a premium price. Increasing profitability in the business is not always easy. The first step is to eliminate unnecessary administrative and operational processes. These processes tend to be non-value-added procedures that your customers will not miss.

Know your Buyer

Understanding what buyers are looking for in a business also allows you to identify potential buyers. Develop a list of possible buyers and their requirements and begin to model your company so that it will be attractive to these buyers. If possible, develop business relationships with these prospects. This allows you to negotiate over several years, maximizing the overall price and reducing the amount of non-cash terms in the sale.

Financial Information

Most buyers expect to have access to audited financial statements. These should be prepared at least two years prior to the time you want to sell. The audit process provides a more accurate picture of the company's financial performance and enhances credibility. It is also important for your business to demonstrate that its reporting systems are simple, accurate, and timely.

Consult a Professional

A professional intermediary, such as your accountant, can help ensure that the business has been fairly valued. The valuation process is important. Every business is different and requires an independent analysis. The mechanics of selling your business are best accomplished by a knowledgeable professional who can guide you through the complexities of the selling process. Your Accountant again, can be a valuable resource and guide.

Avoid Deal Killers

The most common deal killer is an insistence on a high price that cannot be justified by the expected return on investment. Other issues that buyers tend to shun are contracts that cannot be modified and long-term leases. Be a clean company with no environmental, safety or compliance problems. Good housekeeping, repair and maintenance are essential for making a good and valuable impression.

Be Open to Change

Given the time, most companies can improve their earnings. In some cases, a business in a crowded niche should consider purchasing other businesses or product lines to improve its own strategic value to potential buyers. Owners should be open to change in their own business to enhance value over time.

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BUSINESS FOR GOOD

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If you would like to discuss your Business Value Proposition or need assistance in implementing any of the ideas in this article, please contact **Pavilion Accountancy on 01487 898440**

Reducing your water costs in a deregulated market. or Don't rush for SwitchYourWater.com

This April sees the deregulation of the commercial water industry in England. At long last this brings it into line with other primary utilities services such as gas, electricity and telecoms.

At first glance this looks like great news as business consumers, fed up with the high costs, can finally do something about it. Well, not really.

The reality is probably far from this and we have a good indication from the Scottish experience.

Scotland's commercial water industry was deregulated in 2008. The result was almost no change to the status quo for several years with savings averaging around 2-3%.

Very slowly new entrants to the market began to appear and the overall cost of water began to reduce accordingly (around 20%). There was so little movement over the first few years for several reasons chief of which was that, unlike other utilities, water is expensive to maintain and deliver to the customer. Any new entrant will have to have very deep pockets indeed. So new entrants will have a hard time but that still leaves us with the current large suppliers. You would think that as they are now free to compete on price they will be cutting prices to get access to the vast numbers of new customers available to them. Well, not really.

Despite all the noise being made the Scottish experience tells us that the large companies are only looking to compete for high usage customers. I have discussed this issue with two leading suppliers. One would only state that they were looking for high water users while the other stated that they will not look to switch anyone using less than £75,000 of water use annually.

The large water companies may feel that there is a lot to gain in the deregulated market but they also have a huge amount to loose. They are in a protective mode and will not be aiming at each others customer base until they are forced to.

In short, if there is no new blood in the new deregulated system then there is little momentum for change.

Don't get down about it. It will come and in the meantime there is still a lot we can do to reduce your business water costs.

Check, Reduce & Switch

Bill checking - Specialists can examine your water bills dating back 6 years to see if you have been overcharged. This may be able to be done for free, if so a % of anything returned will be claimed by the specialist.

Water reduction - If indicated, simple water reduction measures can be implemented. You may need a survey which may cost or this may also be done on a share of the money returned. Always get a free consultation before committing to the survey.

Switching - If able, join a group scheme to entice one of the big suppliers to offer a better price (this may take time but it will happen).

If you require any further information on water or any other cost reduction issue do not hesitate to contact me.

Dean Crago XXXXXXXXX

Small Business face 37 challenges of which tax is only one!

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has released a list of 37 challenges facing the self-employed. These include no sick pay, no employer pension contributions, inferior maternity pay and pensions and putting their homes and family's livelihoods on the line to build their businesses.

FSB Regional Chairman Graham Buck said: "While setting yourself up in business can be incredibly rewarding and exciting, there are many risks and the government provides few safety nets. The risk that the self-employed face makes them fundamentally different to employees. This is why the proposed National Insurance tax grab on this group is an absolute kick in the teeth, just at a time when we need to create more entrepreneurs, not fewer.

"We called on the Government to think again and there is at least now a delay to allow Ministers a rethink. They must come to their senses. Each and every item on this list shows just how different life is like for the regions many thousands of self-employed people. The Government should be spending its time focusing on issues like these rather than picking the pockets of the UK's hard-working strivers."

The list istelf is extensive, but major points include:

- Insecurity/volatility of income
- Poor access to mortgages
- Having to risk their houses and personal income to build their business
- No redundancy pay
- No access to pensions auto-enrolment
- No employer pension contributions
- No maternity pay
- No rights against unfair dismissal
- No holiday pay
- No right to notice
- No Sick Pay
- No Compassionate Leave
- Late payment from large businesses
- Unfair contract terms from big business
- Poor protection from crime
- Poor access to the courts to settle legal dispute
- No limited liability protection for the self-employed
- No access to enhanced employer benefits , like income protection insurance
- Personal responsibility for legal liabilities
- High cost of tax administration

As experts in business, FSB offers members a wide range of vital business services, including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in Government. Its aim is to help smaller businesses achieve their ambitions. More information is available at www.fsb.org.uk/bedscambsherts and follow on twitter @fsbbedcambhert

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DISCOVER RAMSEY

The Promoting Ramsey Projects looks forward into spring this month, offering a little insight in the happiest day of your life!

One-stop wedding shop right here!

By Ann Cuthbert, Ramsey's Promotions Offic

The trend for wedding receptions at the moment, apparently, is "industrial with copper and hessian accents"…I think I prefer rustic, vintage or classic but then maybe I am out of date! Whatever your dream wedding, now is the time to get booking and, you may not have considered this before, but we have everything you need in one place right here in Ramsey.

Beautiful settings & venues

I honestly think you'd struggle to find a more authentic, quintessentially English setting for your wedding photographs than our Abbey and Church Greens. The area is a real heritage treasure with the Gatehouse and some remaining abbey walls, the horse pond and the medieval Thomas a Beckett church. This is a place where people have congregated after their weddings for hundreds of years.

If you like the heritage theme then there are two venues that would be ideal for you, the 1940s Camp and Ramsey Rural Museum. Both venues have hosted wedding receptions and are gearing up to have more this year. You can take a look at the Drill Hall, the 1940s Camp on Wood lane on April 30th at the Spring Vintage and Unique Wedding Fayre where the first brides to be through the door will receive a free goody bag.

Ramsey also has more modern venues – the Abbey College, the Community Centre and the new venue in Ramsey, the Old Nene Golf and Country Club, with its brand new club house, restaurant, bars and function rooms. This is not the only golf club in town as we have, of course, had weddings for many years at the established Ramsey Golf Club by the Abbey Green.

Beautiful Brides

From head to toe brides can be dressed and beautified in town – from toe nails to veils and everything in between! All our hair salons have specialists at "up dos" and are happy for you to have trial sessions to try new looks. We are also very well served in Ramsey with beauty salons and even have our own bridal salon. Lesley Gibbs of Harvey's Bridal Boutique says, "We pride ourselves on a personal service whatever your budget and most of our business is from personal recommendation".

Abbey Green – a romantic backdrop for your wedding (Taff Manton Photography)

Bouquet from WildFrost

Beautiful Cakes, Flowers and Memories

Within 50 metres on the Great Whyte there are 3 florists and one specialist for your wedding cake –Flowers by Amanda, WildFrost, Rose Cottage and the Windmill Bakery. All can recommend photographers to make sure your memories can be with you forever.

Flowers by Amanda

For more information on the Promoting Ramsey Project or to add an event to the events calendar please contact: ann.cuthbert@cambsacre.org.uk

Wedding - 1940's Bar

A rustic setting at the Rural Museum

Bury Parish Council

Peter Hazell - *Chairman*

In March we have "two for the price of one" as it were in that there is the AGM as well as the normal monthly meeting. In attendance were five Parish Councillors including the County Councillor, both District Councillors and three members of the public.

The first part was the AGM. The chairman thanked the outgoing chairman for all the good work he had done over the last four years, thanked the parish clerk and the councillors for the good work they had done and to others who had made a difference to the village.

Events of the year were summarized along with the continuing saga of RAF Upwood and the clinic sites and the number of times the police and fire brigade have been called out as a result of young people trespassing. Reports were also read out from some of the organizations that use the village facilities.

The second part was the normal monthly meeting. RAF Upwood has once again been in the news. A number of complaints were received from residents of Redebourne Lane due to cars being raced on the old airfield causing a horrendous noise. A representative of Strawsons, the owners of the site, was contacted and hopefully the problem will not occur again, although trespassing of young people seems to be a regular occurrence.

Another complaint had been received by the District Councillors concerning speeding traffic on the High Street, the B1040 coming from Warboys. Drivers seem to be completely ignorant of the fact that there is a 30mph speed limit on that road as there is on all roads in the village including the Upwood Road. It's not just cars but all vehicles.

This brings me to mention SPEEDWATCH. The village has a small group of volunteers, but more are needed. "SPEEDWATCH NEEDS YOU". The more people we have the more times Speedwatch can operate and the greater the chance of slowing the traffic. Interested? Then email

Yet another complaint from villagers was the parking in Grenfell road near the junction with Upwood Road. Parking is now limited to 3/4 cars for a short period of time during the day as the notices say, but it appears that some vehicles are parking on an almost permanent basis(4/5 days) without moving, i.e. using it as if it were parking for their own property. I ask that these vehicle owners respect the aims of parking in that part of Grenfell Road as the signs say.

Enough of complaints. Our next meeting is on Wednesday 5th April at 7.30pm in the village hall.

UNIVERSITY OF THE 3RD AGE

The learned minds of the U3A took part in a talk this month given by Great Fen Volunteer Co-ordinator Mandy Corney, who described the plight of Harold Penketh and Spitfire X4953

So Many by so Few

By Enid Hubbard – Ramsey and District U3A

This month's speaker for the Ramsey and District U3A was Mandy Corney, Administration Officer and Volunteer Co-ordinator for 'The Great Fen Project'. She explained that 'The Great Fen Project' would take 50 years to complete and was for the benefit of wildlife, the environment and people. Mandy then told us about Spitfire X4953 which had crash landed in the fens in 1940 killing the pilot, airman Harold Edwin Penketh. He was 20 years old and on a training exercise when he was killed. The reason for the crash was never determined.

In 2015, the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, a team from Oxford Archaeological East headed by Stephen Macaulay went to the fens to excavate the remains of the plane. They had one week in October to complete their mission and unbelievably the weather was fine for all six days. They had the use of a huge mechanical digger and its expert driver who scooped through the soil and deposited it exactly where it could be sorted through by the waiting professionals. The story of the dig was made into a documentary which we watched that afternoon.

No press release

Two young boys witnessed the Spitfire falter and crash in 1940 and their stories formed part of the film which Mandy showed. Maxey Stacey who was born in 1930 and Tony Redhead who was born in 1932 explained how the event had a great impact on their young lives. They said there was no press release about the crash, after all there was no television, no mobile phones or internet and so only a few fenland people were aware of what had happened.

Their memories brought alive the events that happened and members of the U3A were enthralled by their story as it unfolded from the beginning of the dig to the unveiling of a commemoration stone in honour of Harold Penketh.

Bomb disposal unit

The dig itself required a large team of experts including an army bomb disposal unit who were on hand should any munitions be found. Also among those taking part in the dig were veterans of later conflicts who have been recruited as part of the Ministry of Defence Archaeology Group's 'Operation Nightingale', which teaches archaeology and heritage skills to those who have sustained physical or mental trauma on military service.

The finds are still being cleaned of mud and clay and are held in various locations, but will eventually be returned to the Great Fen to be part of a permenant exhibition.

It should be remembered that the average life expectancy for a member of Bomber Command was twelve weeks and often much shorter. Men who served as 'tail gun Charlies' at the back of the planes had a life expectancy of four sorties or two weeks. 55,573 members of Bomber Command died during World War Two; that's more than serve in the entire Royal Air Force today.

The tribute paid by Winston Churchill to Bomber Command remains as pertinent today as it did in 1940, " Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

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RAMSEY MILLION

The Ramsey Million Partnership announced their grant recipients last month, and are looking for your help with their latest transport survey. See below for more!

TRANSPORT SURVEY

Whilst on the subject of transport and access - have you filled in our survey? We are aware that people without access to a car find it very difficult to access shops and services outside of Ramsey Parish. To address some of the issues of limited transport links, Ramsey Million has funded projects that bring affordable activities into our area. We also introduced the 'Kickstart' moped hire scheme.

To enable Ramsey Million Partnership to explore possible solutions to the transport issue we need to have accurate data. You can help by getting as many people of all ages to fill in our transport survey. The survey was printed in Issue 38 of Ramsey Neighbourhood News but if you require more surveys you can pick them up from the library (where you will also find the collection box on the main desk), download from www.ramseymillion.org or you can take the survey online via SurveyMonkey.

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/V57NSXX

Once we have collected as much information as possible we will see if there is anything we can do to improve the situation. We can't fund commercial bus services but we can investigate other possibilities.

Please return your completed surveys to Ramsey library by 30th April 2017.

SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Ramsey Million Big Local is delighted to announce the latest round of grant recipients. Over the last four years Ramsey Million Partnership has allocated over £75,000 of grants to groups working in Ramsey Parish. There are many fantastic, mainly volunteer run, established and new initiatives in our area and Ramsey Million Partnership is proud to be able to support them where possible.

In this round of grants, we wanted to target projects that promote intergenerational activities and those which allow greater access to activities and services. Applicants were asked to consider how their projects/groups enable people of all generations to interact. We were also interested in ideas that address the lack of public transport. This could be by bringing services/activities into the parish or by providing alternatives to existing transport provision.

We were overwhelmed by the response and had over £53,000 of requests for an available grant pot of £15,000. As in previous years, to ensure consistency and fairness, all applications were judged against an approved scoring system. All grant applications must address at least one of the Big Local outcomes as well responding to an issue highlighted by you in our community consultation. Other requirements are that the grant be paid to an organisation – not an individual, quotes are provided and the application clearly outlines how the grant will be used to make a difference to people in Ramsey Parish.

Subject to their acceptance the following groups have been allocated a grant:

- St Thomas a Becket Church
- 511(Ramsey) Air Cadet Squadron
- Gauntlet Auto Project
- Great Fen
- Community Skills Swap (White House Farm)
- Nene Valley Gliding Club
- Ramsey Young Carers (Carers Trust)
- Ramsey Community Bus Association
- Fenland Light Railway

We look forward to updating you on the projects as they develop.

Our micro-grant programme is open all year round or until the allocated funds have been used up. This grant pot is for grants up to £100 to support unfunded groups. So far we have allocated micro-grants to:

- Ramsey Mortuary Chapels
- Ramsey Camera Club

To apply for a micro-grant, download a form from www.ramseymillion.org (the form can be found at the foot of the homepage), email grants.ramseymillion@gmail.com or contact the Neighbourhood Office.

CREATE - FEST
MUSIC & CREATIVE FESTIVAL

CREATE-Fest is back!

CREATE-Fest is back! The acts are booked, the stage is set so come and join us for this FREE music festival on 15th July, The Camp, Wood Lane, Ramsey. Due to popular demand, we have extended the event to include an evening session. If you would like to have a community or trade stall at this great community event please get in touch (contact information below). Look out for further details in the coming months.

Local Trust | Big Local

Want to be involved in Ramsey Million Big Local?

If you live, work or volunteer in Ramsey Parish you can apply to be a partnership member, be on a smaller more focussed project group, offer to be an advisor or help out at events. As a resident in a Big Local area you also become a member of the Big Local Family of 150 areas throughout the country, opening up a wide variety of opportunities.

For more details visit: www.ramseymillion.org or www.localtrust.org.uk

Facebook: Ramsey Million
Twitter: RamseyMillionBL
Contact: 01487 814897 or 07955 817137
Email: ramseymillion@gmail.com

Ramsey library | Friends of Ramsey Library

Arts Alive in Libraries is a project funded by the Arts Council England and several events have been held at Ramsey Library during March. The library staff and the Ramsey Library Board put together a mini Crime Fest, as crime fiction is very popular with lots of books available to borrow. First off was a visit by Cambridge based author, Nicola Upson, who gave a really interesting talk on her work. Her main character is Josephine Tey, who is based on a real life crime fiction writer from the early twentieth century. Originally, Nicola had planned to write a biography but instead has written a series of mysteries based around Josephine's real and imagined life. I am now reading a biography by another author, the original books by Josephine Tey and the modern ones by Nicola Upson to see the connections between them.

The second event was a Murder Mystery evening where thirty five guests watched "The Comedy Club," written and performed by the Strictly Murder group from Cambridge. After the first act, a fish and chip supper was enjoyed before the final three acts. The table which correctly guessed "who done it," won a small prize, as did the table who earned most points in a film music quiz. It was a very entertaining evening. (We have a lot of very clever tables in Ramsey!)

Finally, we had a talk by Annie James on "Bound for Botany Bay" about people from Huntingdonshire (including Ramsey) who were transported to Australia and Tasmania for criminal activities. Twenty people listened to an informative and interesting account of these hard and difficult times. A member of the audience had brought a picture of his house in Tasmania which had been built by convicts. Annie was a very knowledgeable speaker and I hope we get to hear some more of her talks.

For those of you who like doing quizzes, the Friends group have produced a Crime Fiction Quiz, urging you to use those "little grey cells" to find the answers. These are available from the library for £1 and the closing date is 4th May, so plenty of time left to do it.

Springtime came to the library on 18th March, when around 30 children made a flowery clock face, planted a spring bulb and followed a picture trail to find letters revealing a word. There were many beautiful and artistic pictures produced.

The next children's event will be a Lego Club on Saturday 22nd April from 10.30 am until 12 noon. This will cost 50p per child, is suitable for children aged 5-11 who must be accompanied by an adult. If you have a baseboard please bring it with you. Write the date in your diary, you don't want to miss it.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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ONE TO WATCH
Free Fire

On the surface, Free Fire would seem to be the exact opposite or Reservoir Dogs, in that it ignores most of the introduction and aftermath in favour of concentrating on the middle, when everything goes horribly wrong.

Per the official synopsis, a gang of criminals (made up of truly impressive character actors) meet up in a warehouse in order to purchase arms, when a disagreement turns into a full-on shootout between the two parties making the transaction. As with many such Film-4 funded projects, it relies less on budget and more on talent, boasting a cast that would make a talent scout sit up and beg. As a personal fan, I'm truly looking forward to seeing the creations of Sharlto Copley (The A Team, District 9) and Cillian Murphy (Peaky Blinders, Inception), but with Arnie Hammer, Brie Larson and many others thrown into the mix, entertainment is certainly promised.

Ben Wheatley is just one of those directors I can't quite ignore, everything he does just seems to draw me in. Perhaps I am giving his artistic style too much credit, and it is simply a matter of excellent trailers, but his work has features some of the most intriguing films I've watched over the last two years, including the magnificently Orwellian High-Rise, starring golden-boy Tom Hiddlestone. From the looks of things, this next addition should follow on the same lines. Expect dark humour, plenty of critical themes and a lack of the blockbuster tropes we have come to expect in modern cinema – maybe not for everyone though!

ONE TO LISTEN TO
Humans

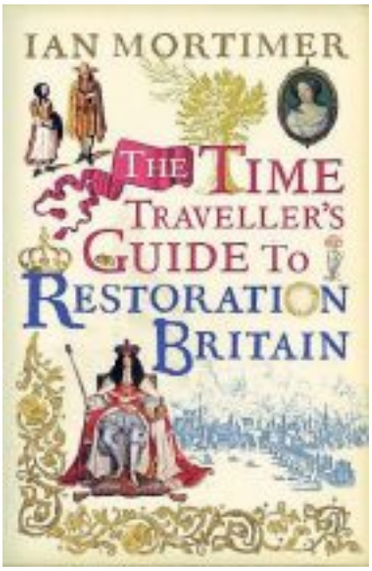
Gorrilaz, the British virtual band which captured the imagination of the globe with their Damon Albarn, the Blur frontman who conceived of the band with comic-book artist Jamie Hewlitt, was on BBC Radio one this month to première two of the tracks: "Saturnz Barz" featuring Popcaan and "Andromeda" featuring D.R.A.M, both of which have been well received within the industry.

While on the air with Radio 1, Albarn spoke at length about Humanz. "Simply put, we're in transition, we're turning into something else," Albarn said of the album's narrative. "The album kind of came from this dark fantasy. Just imagine, the weirdest, most un-predictable thing that changes everything in the world. How would you feel on that night? Would you go and get drunk? Would you stay at home? Just watch TV? Would you talk to people?"

The standard edition of Humanz offers 14 tracks, and includes contributions from Mavis Staples, Carly Simon, Grace Jones, De La Soul, Pusha T, Danny Brown, and Kelela.

The album is slated for release on April 28th.

TWO TO READ
The Time Traveller's Guide to Restoration Britain



As always, we try to cater to every taste here, so we turn from the decidedly fictitious to the deadly facts of restoration Britain.

This is an up-close-and-personal look at Britain between the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660 and the end of the century, part of a trilogy of time-traveller's guides in a planned series by Dr Ian Mortimer, who has been described by The Times as 'the most remarkable medieval historian of our time'.

The events chronicled of the book range from the scientific (Isaac Newton's Principia Mathematica, the bedrock of modern science, is published) to the magical (in the same time period, the last witch to be sentenced to death is executed). There are great fires in London and Edinburgh; the plague disappears; a global trading empire develops; the last vestiges of medievalism are swept away and replaced by a tremendous cultural flowering.

Why are half of the population under the age of twenty-one? What is considered rude? And why is duelling so popular? Mortimer delves into the nuances of daily life to paint a vibrant and detailed picture of society at the dawn of the modern world as only he can.

Incidentally, those interested in Dr Mortimer's work may not be aware he also writes poetry, songs and fiction. His first three novels, the Clarenceux Trilogy, set in the 1560s, appeared under his middle names, 'James Forrester', while his latest novel, 'The Outcasts of Time', which takes place across the years 1348-1942, is published under his full name. Who knows, maybe a little fiction will come into this after all!

The book is expected on shelves by April 11th

SIX OF CROWS
by Leigh Bardugo

Review by Emily Bradley-Dorman

Six of Crows blew my mind and I could not put it down! I fell in love with the characters and the world Leigh created and I am now ready to pack up my life and move to Ketterdam!

Lets not get ahead of ourselves though, for those of you yet to read Six of Crows these are the basics; Six of Crows in told from multiple points of view as a rag-tag group of misfits take on an impossible heist. Their mission is to break into the impenetrable Ice Court, retrieve a very important hostage and make it out again. Throughout the book Kaz and his crew encounter a whole host of unimaginable obstacles as they try to complete their task and bring home a reward that will change their lives forever.

This is a book full of characters that have just as many weaknesses as they do strengths, which in hand makes them completely and utterly imperfectly perfect! Whilst reading I couldn't help but smile, then cry, then roll my eyes and maybe once or twice scream but that's because the story got to me. It got into my head and my heart and I needed to know what came next.

I'm not going to go into much detail about the story because the thing I loved most about Six of Crows was that fact I could never predict what was going to happen next! The plot twists and turns so often you sometimes wonder which way is up! The surprises come out of nowhere, keeping the reader on their toes.

Overall I couldn't get enough of this book! If you haven't read it yet then what are you waiting for? It has everything you could possibly want from a book, it has adventure, star-crossed lovers, dark undertones, humour and a story that will captivate you from start to finish.

Upwood Ukuleles sell out in just a few weeks

Upwood Ukuleles

In just over four weeks, the Upwood Ukuleles have sold every ticket to their next concert!

Having advertised their latest outing on February 19th, on Facebook, a performance at their home venue of Upwood Village Hall on Friday 5th May, the Ukuleles found themselves in such high demand that by March 22nd they were completely sold out.

Part of the Ukulele's success is their reputation in the village, which is based not only on their fantastic music but also on their ability to have a bit of fun while playing! This being said, they do have a serious side, offering regular donations to Magpas as opposed to charging fees and performing on Radio Cambridgeshire, often-times at Christmas due to their well received holiday singles and videos.

According to their Facebook page, "Upwood Ukuleles include a wide assortment of musical styles and instruments in their shows. As well as the whole range of ukuleles from soprano to bass, don't be surprised to hear kazoos, harmonicas, recorders and various percussion instruments including the cajon. Audience participation is encouraged so warm up your vocal chords ready to join in with songs ranging from George Formby classics, through 1960s novelty numbers, to current chart hits"

Fans will now have to wait for their next outing, although knowing this lively group they will not have to wait for too long!

Warboys "It's a Knockout"

A fun filled family day

Help raise funds for your local groups and charities

11am-3pm
Monday 1 May 2017 at
Warboys Sports Field (Forge Way)
Entrance £2 per adult (free for children *under 16*)

COME ALONG & JOIN THE GREAT VILLAGE GET TOGETHER

There is still time to get involved ... so feel free to

- enter a team *(limited places still available)*
- book a stall
- volunteer to help on the day
- donate a raffle prize

All you need do is contact us before 12 April

WHAT WILL BE HAPPENING ON THE DAY?

It's a Knockout team races
BBQ and refreshments
Free picnic boxes for Warboys children under 11 *(tickets available from Post Office and Davies Newsagents)*
Coconut shy
Kids bouncy castle
Upwood Ukele Band
Lots of stalls to browse
Raffle with MANY prizes (including a £100 1st prize)
Licenced bar in the Sports and social club

Special notes
No parking in the vicinity, but some disabled spaces available.

No dogs or glassware allowed on the Sports Field.

For more information contact us by email warboyscommunityassociation@gmail.com or ring Val on 07825 551975, Angela on 01487 823041 or Kath on 01487 822927

All monies raised go back into the Warboys community groups or to their chosen charity

A Warboys Community Association event

ADULT LEARNING & SKILLS RAMSEY

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Courses starting in May:

Yoga, Jewellery Making, Salsa, Art, French Beginners, Furniture Restoration, ESOL, Creative Sewing, Explore the Internet, Digital Photography, DIY, Mindfulness, Creative Writing.

Free Course

First Aid – An 8 week course starting Wednesday 3rd May 7pm - 9pm

Contact the College for further information:
01487 811338 or email:
acl@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk
Full details are on our website
www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/index.php/abbey-adult-education
Opening times: Mon to Thurs 10am-2pm

SPRING INTO SUMMER AT HOLWOOD NURSERY

Holwood Nursery is a family owned retail plant nursery. Most of the plants on sale have been grown on site. If not grown on site, then, the plants have been grown by other specialist nursery growers within the Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire area. Our prices are very competitive and we put a lot of time into the care of our plants. We offer our customers help and advice if they require it, and a local delivery service for any large or bulky purchases.

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Telephone: 01487 740936

Email: holwoodnursery@aol.com

http://www.holwoodnursery.co.uk

Holwood Nursery is located one mile from Somersham on the B1050 between the Fenland towns of Somersham and Chatteris.

Throughout the year we stock- glazed and terracotta pots, compost, canes, trellis, flower and vegetable seeds, ornamental trees and shrubs, fruit trees and fruit bushes, vegetable plants, perennials and alpines, rose bushes, planted pots and hanging baskets, coal, logs and kindling and gardening sundries to name but a few. Also free range eggs (our own hens).

FRAUD WATCH! It's a Scam!

IDENTITY FRAUD REACHES RECORD LEVELS

New Cifas data reveals 173,000 cases recorded in 2016

A record 172,919 identity frauds were recorded in 2016 more than in any other previous year, according to Cifas, the UK's leading fraud prevention service.

Identity fraud now represents over half of all fraud recorded by the UK's not-for-profit fraud data sharing organisation (53.3% of all frauds recorded to Cifas), of which 88% was perpetrated online.

How fraudsters steal your identity

The vast majority of identity fraud happens when a fraudster pretends to be an innocent individual to buy a product or take out a loan in their name. Often victims do not even realise that they have been targeted until a bill arrives for something they did not buy or they experience problems with their credit rating.

To carry out this kind of fraud successfully, fraudsters need access to their victim's personal information such as name, date of birth, address, their bank and who they hold accounts with. Fraudsters get hold of this in a variety of ways, from stealing mail through to hacking; obtaining data on the 'dark web'; exploiting personal information on social media, or though 'social engineering' where innocent parties are persuaded to give up personal information to someone pretending to be from their bank, the police or a trusted retailer.

Who's most likely to be a victim?

Growing numbers of young people have fallen victim in recent years and this upward trend continued in 2016 with almost 25,000 victims under 30. In particular Cifas recorded a 34% increase in under 21s. 2016 also saw increases in victims aged over 40, with 1,869 more victims recorded by Cifas members.

Commander ***Chris Greany***, Police National Coordinator for Economic Crime at City of London Police, said:

"We welcome the figures released by Cifas as it demonstrates how we all need to be alert to preventing identity thieves now more than ever before.

"We do everything we can to stop identity thieves in the fight against fraud, but the key is prevention and protection. Just taking a few simple steps can be the difference to protecting your personal information and your finances."

Mike Haley, Deputy Chief Executive, Cifas said: "These new figures show that identity fraud continues to be the number one fraud threat. With nine out of ten identity frauds committed online and with all age groups at risk, we are urging everyone to make it more difficult for fraudsters to abuse their identity. There are three simple steps that anyone can take to protect themselves: use strong passwords, download software updates when prompted on your devices; and avoid using public wi-fi for banking and online shopping.

"We all remember to protect our possessions through locking our house or flat or car but we don't take the same care to protect our most important asset – our identities. We all need to take responsibility to secure our mail boxes, shred our important documents like bank statements and utility bills, and take sensible precautions online – otherwise we are making ourselves a target for the identity fraudster."

Sign up for free to Action Fraud Alert to receive direct, verified, accurate information about scams and fraud in your area by email, recorded voice and text message.

ADVERTISE IN THE REPORTER FROM AS LITTLE AS £20 PER MONTH

SERVES 4

RAMSEY WALLED GARDEN RECIPE OF THE MONTH

SALMON FISHCAKES

These fishcakes are ideal for a spring meal served with a new potato salad and a fresh green salad. Down2Earth farm shop at Whitehouse Farm will has this year's lettuce and salad leaves available.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

350 gm (12oz) salmon (no bones or skin)
225 gm (8oz) firm fleshed potato
2 tbs chopped fresh coriander (use parsley if coriander not available)
1 heaped tablespoon capers, drained and chopped
2 tbs fresh lime juice (you can use lemon if you have no lime)
A couple of pinches of chilli pepper
Sunflower or groundnut oil for frying

METHOD

1. Boil the potato with skin on with a little salt. Cook for 10-12 mins until almost cooked. When cool skin the potato and grate using the coarse blade of your grater.
2. Chop the salmon into chunks and either give it a few pulses in the food processor or chop finely by hand.
3. Put the salmon and potato in a bowl and mix carefully. Add the coriander, capers, lime juice, chilli and some salt. Mix thoroughly without breaking up the potato.
4. Heat the oil. Take a tablespoon of mixture and form into a rough cake. Do not worry about ragged edges. You should end up with about 12 cakes. When the oil is hot add to the frying pan and fry for about 3 minutes per side.
5. Drain on kitchen paper and serve dotted with chopped fresh coriander.

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RAMSEY - EASTER SWIMMING POOL TIMETABLE

Monday 3rd	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Baby & Toddler Lessons 9.30 - 10.00	Private Use 10.00 - 11.00	Parents & Under 8's 11.00 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 3.30 - 6.00	Public Swim +1 Lane 6.00 - 7.30		Lane Swim 7.30 - 9.00
Tuesday 4th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 11.00		Aquafit 11.05 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 4.00 - 6.00	Public Swim 6.00 - 7.00	Lane Swim 7.00 - 8.00	Private Use 8.00 - 9.00
Wednesday 5th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Baby & Toddler Lessons 9.00 - 10.00	Aquanatal 10.05 - 10.55	Parents & Under 5's 11.00 - 11.55	Aquafit 12.05 - 12.55	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 3.30 - 6.00	Floats Fun 6.00 - 7.00	Lane Swim 7.00 - 9.00	
Thursday 6th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 10.30	Adult Lessons 10.30 - 11.30	Private Use 11.30 - 12.00	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 4.00 - 6.00	Public Swim +1 Lane 6.00 - 7.30		Lane Swim 7.30 - 9.00
Friday 7th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 11.00		Parents & Under 8's 11.00 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Inflatable Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 3.30 - 6.00	Public Swim +1 Lane 6.00 - 7.30		Canoe Club 7.30 - 9.30
Saturday 8th	Early Birds 7.30 - 8.30	Junior Lessons 8.30 - 11.30			Party Hire 12.00 - 12.50	Floats Fun 1.00 - 3.00	Party Hire 3.00 - 3.50	Swimming pool closes at 3.50pm		
Sunday 9th	Lane Swim 8.00 - 9.00	Family Fun 9.00 - 11.00		Parents & Under 5's 11.00 - 11.55	Party Hire 12.00 - 12.50	Floats Fun 1.00 - 2.30	Public Swim + 1 Lane 2.30 - 3.45	Swimming pool closes at 3.45pm		
Monday 10th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Baby & Toddler Lessons 9.30 - 10.00	Private Use 10.00 - 11.00	Parents & Under 8's 11.00 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 3.30 - 6.00	Public Swim +1 Lane 6.00 - 7.30		Lane Swim 7.30 - 9.00
Tuesday 11th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 11.00		Aquafit 11.05 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 4.00 - 6.00	Public Swim 6.00 - 7.00	Lane Swim 7.00 - 8.00	Private Use 8.00 - 9.00
Wednesday 12th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Baby & Toddler Lessons 9.00 - 10.00	Aquanatal 10.05 - 10.55	Parents & Under 5's 11.00 - 11.55	Aquafit 12.05 - 12.55	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 3.30 - 6.00	Floats Fun 6.00 - 7.00	Lane Swim 7.00 - 9.00	
Thursday 13th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 10.30	Adult Lessons 10.30 - 11.30	Private Use 11.30 - 12.00	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 4.00 - 6.00	Public Swim +1 Lane 6.00 - 7.30		Lane Swim 7.30 - 9.00
Friday 14th	**Good Friday** - Swimming Pool Closed (only open for **Junior Lessons** from **3.30pm - 6.00pm**)									
Saturday 15th	Early Birds 7.30 - 8.30	Junior Lessons 8.30 - 11.30			Party Hire 12.00 - 12.50	Floats Fun 1.00 - 3.00	Party Hire 3.00 - 3.50	Swimming pool closes at 3.50pm		
Sunday 16th	Lane Swim 8.00 - 9.00	Family Fun 9.00 - 11.00		Parents & Under 5's 11.00 - 11.55	Party Hire 12.00 - 12.50	Floats Fun 1.00 - 2.30	Public Swim + 1 Lane 2.30 - 3.45	Swimming pool closes at 3.45pm		
Monday 17th	**Easter Monday** - Swimming Pool Closed (only open for **Junior Lessons** from **3.30pm - 6.00pm**)									
Tuesday 18th	Early Birds 6.30 - 8.30	Private Use 8.30 - 11.00		Aquafit 11.05 - 11.55	Lane Swim 12.00 - 1.00	Floats Fun 1.15 - 3.15	Junior Lessons 4.00 - 6.00	Public Swim 6.00 - 7.00	Lane Swim 7.00 - 8.00	Private Use 8.00 - 9.00

Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult (16+) in the water. No more than two under 8's allowed with each adult. The changing rooms are mixed and have separate changing cubicles. A 20p coin (which is returnable) is required to use the swimming pool changing room lockers. During busy periods a call-out system operates. Swims may be limited to 45 minutes. A qualified lifeguard supervises the pool at all times. Entry to the deep end of the pool (also on the inflatable) is at the lifeguards discretion and will be judged on swimming ability. The inflatable is not suitable for non swimmers or children wearing swimming aids.

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BSA Bantam Meet – 12th March 2017

By Dave Clough - National Co-ordinater BSA Owners Club.

Well, it's becoming a bit of a joke.... I can't seem to pick a dry day.

More than a little worried. This morning's meet had been widely advertised on social media to all regional chairs. The pressure was on, as I am now told that it's now part of the local motorcycle clubs social calendar.

Very popular

By the time, I mounted my trusty steed (1969 BSA) it had turned into persistent rain. I wasn't terribly happy. But these meetings are becoming very popular. I needn't have feared, as I arrived at the cross keys, several BSA's were already parked up on the High Street. Well over a dozen further bikes turned up throughout the morning. Thirty five plus bikes and over fifty motorcyclists turned up to enjoy our Sunday morning meet, and that's in heavy rain!

Motorcyclists filled every space in the pub, and several small groups spilled outside to talk and look at bikes. Over the morning several members were introduced to our special guests, Mick and Ryan Anderson, parts suppliers extraordinaire, and fountains of knowledge on BSA Bantams.

Special mention

A special mention has to go to Nikki Green, who stepped in and prevented Kev Cades flood washing us all away, poor old Kev struggled to operate the water boiler. Top marks to Nikki. Hayley, you owe her a pint! Shout out to Terry, who took the time to trailer his BSA from Kings Lynn (word is getting out) then forgets the paperwork for me to sign, so DVLA will issue a number plate. Next time Terry! I've seen the bike, just bring the paperwork mate.

What became very apparent at this morning's meeting was the power of social popular. It's a sad observation that the majority of villagers from Upwood don't appear to support the pub. It looks like the Motorcycling community will be taking this wonderful establishment under its wing for a night meet, and my group on a Sunday morning.

Biker friendly food prices

The Cross Keys Pub is very attractive to us, with its wide high street, the large car park, and biker friendly food prices. It will ensure our patronage and I'll be encouraging other neighbouring clubs to pay homage to this wonderful establishment.

I'm sure the village will have noticed and some may have even heard the rumble as some 90 bikes recently visited on a Wednesday evening. Just imagine how busy it will be in the coming spring and summer. What a wonderful opportunity for any villager to visit and view some of the counties best kept motorcycles. I noted with humour, people who had thrown their leathers away 20+ years ago (RAY) were referring to themselves as bikers, boy did we smile but an excellent rapport and indicative of the excellent rapport and friendship by those villagers meeting us bikers.

New event

To be clear, my club the BSA Bantam Club have nothing to do with the Wednesday evening meets. As bikers, of course we are in attendance as are most of the hardier bikers. As a group we are extremely excited to have this new event on our doorstep. We are next due to meet mid-April.

At all the meets in Upwood everyone is welcome (even Ray) to come along and say hello. Some of us may look a little intimidating, but we are a very friendly bunch, and we'll be in the village from 11am one Sunday morning a month come rain or shine.

Have you lost someone dear to you?
Show your sympathy with an
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
email us at: mail@ramseyand-warboysreporter.couk

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BEREAVEMENT

Antony Thomas McArthur (Tony)
of Upwood
Sadly passed away after illness at home on Wednesday 15th February, 2017 Aged 80 years
Beloved brother of Alec and Malcolm Father to Michael, Richard and Rachel and loving grandad of Felisha and Tia
Special companion of Dawn and friend of Ray
Tony will never be forgotten. Funeral has taken place

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13	Corsa 1.0 S 3Dr, Orange, 13,000 Miles, Local Car	£4,995
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07	Corsa 1.2 Club 3Dr, Silver, Air Con, 23,000 Miles	£3,695
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66	Astra 1.4TTechLine, Silver, Sat Nav, Only 3,000 Miles	£14,495
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16	Insignia 1.4T (Petrol) Design, Sat Nav, 11,000 Miles	£11,995
14	Insignia 2.0 CDTi Energy, Met Blue, Lovely Lady Owner, 25,000 Miles	£11,495
62	Insignia 2.0CDTi Elite, Purple, Leather, Sat Nav, 41,00 Miles, Local Car	£9,995
62	Insignia 2.0CDTi Exclusiv, Steel Grey, 68,000 Miles, Local Car	£5,495
	BURTON BROTHERS EX-DEMOS	
65	New Shape Astra 1.6 Turbo Diesel SRi 5Dr, Flame Red, Only 8,000 Miles	£13,995
16	Corsa 1.0T Limited Edition, White, 5,000 Miles	£12,995
64	Insignia 2.0 CDTi Ltd Ed, Black, 5,500 Miles Only, Price New	£12,995
66	Adam Energise 1.2, Black, Only 1,000 Miles	£12,495
16	Meriva 1.4 Exclusiv, Met Grey, Only 2,000 Miles	£11,995
16	Adam Rocks 1.2 3Dr, Blue, 5,000 Miles	£11,995
66	Viva SE, Silver, Air Con, Only 500 Miles	£8,995
	OTHER MAKES	
12	BMW X1 SE Auto, Black, Leather, 46,000 Miles	£13,495
14	Renault Captur 1.5 CDTI Dynamique, Orange, Sat Nav, Only 5,000 Miles	£10,995
14	Renault Captur 1.5T Diesel, Beige, Sat Nav, 18,000 Miles	£9,995
15	Hyundai 120 SE 5Dr, Silver, 12,000 Miles	£7,995
15	Suzuki Swift SZ4, Met Blue, Sat Nav, Only 2,000 Miles	£7,995
60	Nissan Juke Acenta Sport, Met Red, 34,000 Miles	£6,995
10	Toyota Aygo+ 1.0 VVTi 3Dr, Chilli Red, 15,000 Miles, Lovely People	£3,995
09	Hyundai i30 1.4 Comfort 5Dr, 80,000 Miles	£3,695
08	Citroen C4 VTR+ 1.5D 5Dr, Silver, 76,000 Miles	£2,995

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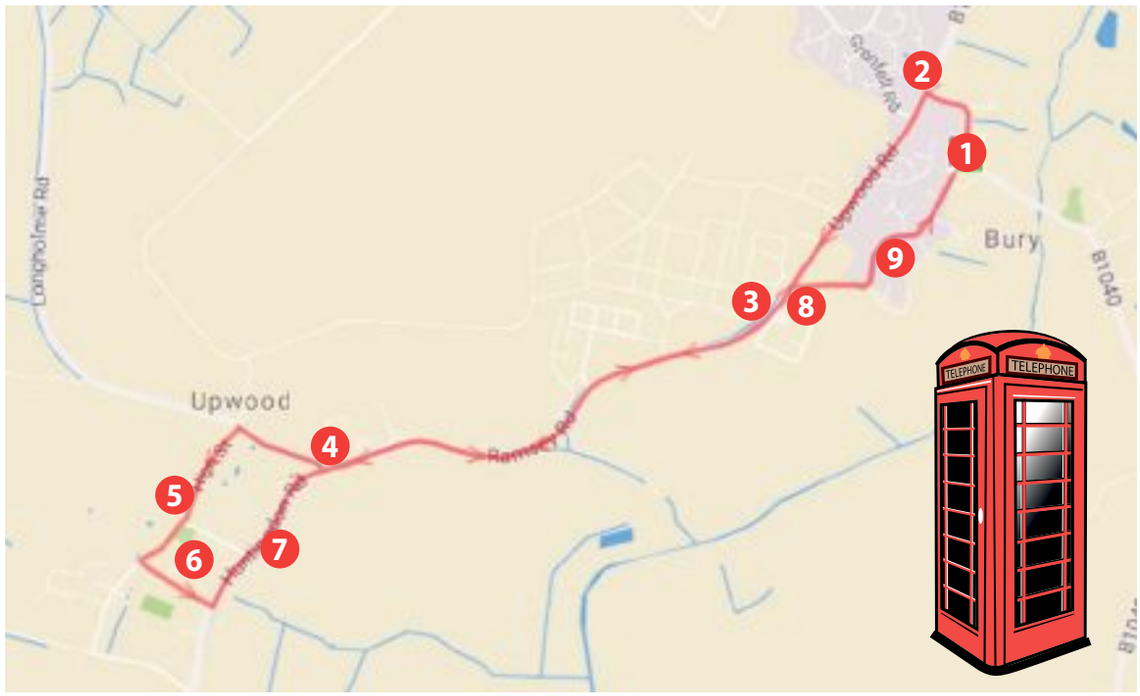
The Readers Pub Crawl

A walk designed for those who love to read, and enjoy a comfy public house to read in.

As part of the fitness challenge, I have spent an extraordinary amount of time wandering around the local area. Starting from this month, I'll be sharing some of my favourite walks in and around Ramsey, while highlighting the unique local feature which drew me out rambling in the first place. Hopefully, we will be following this series with separate articles within further editions (for example, this month I'm walking to the Upwood Book Exchange, next month we will be taking a look at its history.)

But for now, please enjoy this surprisingly energetic route between my home village and its neighbour, which takes in the sights and leads to a newspaper at the very least – and possibly even a pint or a book! For our first walk, it's the Readers Pub Crawl through Bury and Upwood.



DIRECTIONS

1. Follow the B1040 from Bury Stores to the White Lion Pub. Highlights here include the Bury Village Sign and noticeboard, which offers information on parish council meetings and local events.
2. Turn left at the White Lion and continue along this road until you reach a crossing just past Valiant Square towards RAF Upwood. Bury Cakes and Pies can be found on this route, and offers a great chance to stock up on drinks and snacks.
3. Cross over the road and continue past RAF Upwood, enjoying views of the fields, until reaching Fairmede park, where a large grassy area and benches offer a rest stop if needed!
4. Continue along Ramsey Road, heading past Upwood Primary School, until you reach a T Junction. Head right, towards the Nene Valley Gliding Club.
5. Take the next left, crossing the road and turning onto the High Street. At the next junction you will find the ideal lunch spot at the Cross Keys, which lies opposite the Upwood Book Exchange. Time to grab your next book!
6. When ready to set off, head up Church Lane and enjoy the scenic views of St Peters Parish Church, before reaching the main road.
7. Turn left and follow the road until you again reach Upwood Primary School, continuing on the same path until you come back to the crossing at Valiant Square.
8. After the crossing, turn right into Valiant Square and head down the horse track leading to Owls End. If you are looking to add on the miles, have a quick trip around the square to really exercise your legs.
9. Turn left when reaching Owls end and follow the road back to Bury Stores. Stops potentially include the playing fields or Bury Park, where children's play equipment is available.

WHY NOT CHALLENGE ADAM?

With this challenge over, we are now looking for another way to make our editor suffer expand his horizons.
Do you have any ideas?
Contact us at mail@ramseyandwarboysreporter.co.uk or call 01487 462 100

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Is coming to Ramsey

WHY PHONEBOXES?

Next month, we'll be exploring the history of the unusual book exchange nestled in the heart of Upwood, inside the telephone box! Here, we examine the phonebox as a unique part of the English heritage.

The red telephone box is still something of a common sight in the UK, although sadly one that is associated with decline. Its design, so much a part of British heritage that they have become tourist attractions, has been exported all over the globe, but what do we really know about these mysteries red boxes?

The first ever prototype was produced out of concrete in 1920, with the current model designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, the designer of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral and Battersea Power Station, in 1924 following a competition. Oddly, his original drawings suggest a silver colour scheme, but in a fit of pre-20th century branding the Post Office changed this to red.

However, most of us will recognise what is known as the K6 model, which was commissioned in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V, of which there were once over 70,000 in the UK, Malta, Bermuda and Gibraltar.

However, A decline in payphone usage has drastically reduced the number of phone boxes across the UK - according to BT there were 92,000 in 2002, and there are currently less than 40,000 , including around 8,000 traditional red ones, 2,400 of which are Grade-II Listed.

While this is a far cry from their heyday in 1980, the phone box still has many fans, some of whom band together to take on the many redundant red boxes have under BT's 'Adopt-a-box' scheme. One of the most common, especially in rural areas, is as a lending library or book exchange, as is the case in of our local model. Others include:

- One on the end of Brighton pier, which helps sell souvenirs
- One in Loweswater, which houses a defibrillator
- One in Prickwillow, which has become an art gallery
- One in Shepreth, another local example which briefly became a pub called the Dog and Bone.

On the commercial front, The Red Kiosk Company leases out decommissioned phone boxes, offering the chance to "run your own business out of an iconic red kiosk".

The first two self-contained food and beverage kiosks within the shell of these iconic boxes were launched on New Road, near Pavilion Gardens in Brighton in June 2014.

"These iconic red phone boxes are both a great piece of engineering and architecture" comments director Eddie Ottewell, who founded the company alongside Steve Beeken, "Our aim is to redefine the usage to suit modern day needs and requirements without compromising their external appearance"

FITNESS CHALLENGE

Yes, Adam is still running away with the fitness challenge, although this month he is taking it one day at a time in the swimming pool, and is surprised by fitness test results!

THE FORGOTTEN JOYS OF THE SWIMMING POOL

ADAM REDISCOVERS A CHILDHOOD PASSION FOR SWIMMING THIS MONTH, DIVING HEAD-FIRST INTO THE RAMSEY POOL (METAPHORICALLY, THAT IS!)

Growing up, swimming was just what I did on a Wednesday. From as early as I can recall, me and my brother bundled into the family car and were driven up to the pool to improve our stroke and seek badge after badge. Having never been particularly athletic, I was surprisingly good, eventually competing at a regional level (from what I recall I was soundly thrashed, but for a boy lacking in sporting prowess it was enough just to attend!).

I was never happier than when I could mix it with the larger, sportier lads during those few weeks of PE swimming at school, where I was able to keep up for once, and even eventually turned my passion into profession, gaining my first teenage job as a swimming teacher. How, then, did I forget I enjoyed it so much!

Diving back in

Once again, it was friends and family that dragged me back into the deep end! I actually first re-entered the pool in February - the first pleasure coming just from trying on my shorts – I was amazed to find myself comfortably fitting back into the same pair I had worn before university! Spurred on by my rapidly diminishing waistline, I jumped on in to the One Leisure Ramsey Pool and started back into my old freestyle stroke as if riding a bike – by the end of the second length, I was gasping like the proverbial fish out of water.

What had happened? I became half convinced the water was harder than I remember, as my old gliding stroke had been replaced by a tough slog as if through treacle. Worse still, my breathing was a mess – muscle memory was still trying to force me to breathe every three strokes, but my body simply couldn't keep up that rhythm. In the end, I forced out about twenty minutes and went to the showers, thoroughly disheartened.

When I went back this month, I was prepared. First things first, it was into the medium lane for me. At Ramsey, the pool is divided into three, with the fastest on the right and the more sedate on the left – I planted myself firmly in the middle. Secondly, I began to work furiously on my breast stroke, leaving freestyle (or front crawl, as many will call it) for the moment as I worked my way back in. Still working hard (I wouldn't describe my pace or performance as leisurely), I was soon working my way back up, first completing a kilometre, then a mile, and most recently a near hour-long stretch of 100 lengths, a nice round 2000m to finish the month. I came back the next day to do another kilometre, mostly to prove to myself that I could!

Are you an Early Bird?

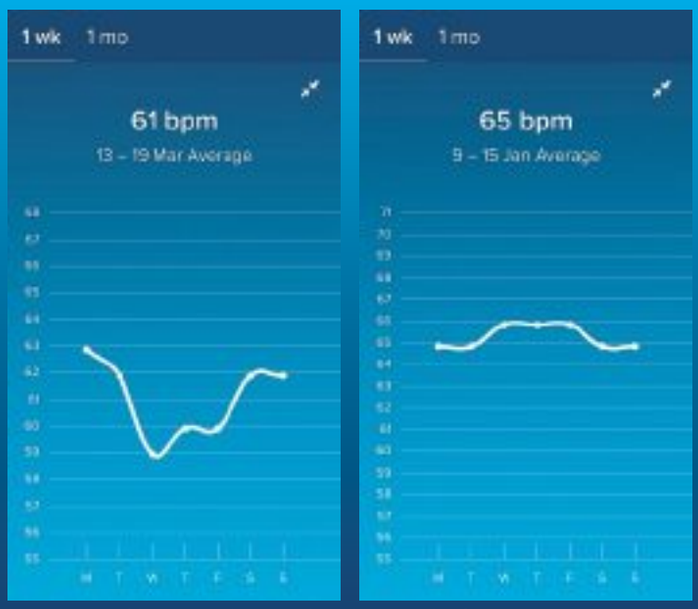
There are several tips I could give the potential return swimmer, including the necessity to buy goggles and a few tips on pool etiquette (if possible, stop at the end and let the faster swimmer through, for example), but the hardest thing for me was finding the time to get down in the first place!

Don't get me wrong, One Leisure have a very generous timetable, with the pool open seven days a week, with the only private sessions being during late school hours and swimming lessons. There's also floats fun, classes and general swims, catering to just about anyone, but if you really want to get a fitness session or lengthy swim in, you're going to need a lane.

A picture of me running, because no-one wants a picture of me swimming!

Here, One Leisure offer several sessions throughout the day; I'll try and offer a few pros and cons for each. Early Birds occurs every morning and is a great way to start the day, but tend to be reasonably busy at their earliest and tough to fit into a 9-5 later on. The mid-day sessions are still my favourite, as they tend to be slightly quieter and break up the day very nicely, but these currently only occur later in the week and, with showers, will take up an inordinate amount of a lunch break.

This leaves the evening session, which tends to stretch out during the week and contains at least one lane, which accommodates the serious swimmer. It is moderately busy, but as ever with One Leisure things are never too packed, and I have enjoyed several conversations with the regular crowd of swimmers, who all in all seem to be a helpful, friendly lot! As ever, getting back into the swing is simply a case of making at least one of these part of your routine, and no trying to go off too hard at the start.



According to my fitbit, my resting heart rate is lower than ever and my fitness score continues to improve!

Fitness test talk

Speaking of ambitions, its been something of a mixed month. The best news, verified at my most recent One Leisure fitness test, is the confirmation that I am finally overweight! The scales have shifted in my favour one more time, dropping another two kg over the course of this month, and finally my BMI is out of the obese category. Given the inherent errors in BMI (its notoriously unreliable when it comes to body type) I will likely never reach the lofty heights of 'ideal', but this is an incredible step physically and psychologically, if not for my bank manager as they watch more money spent on increasingly skinnier shirts.

The worst, it seems I am no fitter than before! I certainly feel it, and both my ability to push myself to the limit and my heart rate monitoring seem to suggest otherwise (see graphs), but according to a heart-rate test in Huntingdon last month I am still firmly in the average category. Don't get me wrong, I'm very pleased to be there in the first place, but after the last few weeks I was perhaps hoping to have jumped up a little more. Either way, this adds yet another goal into the odd mixture that has become my fitness life, and I am determined to up the score by the end of April.

Personally…

I do like to end on a rumination, and I seem to have caught myself reminiscing more over the last few months. When I started this gearing up for this column, I was well over 110kg. On my first attempt, I was diagnosed with high blood pressure, thoroughly dreading the idea of exercising in a class, and hadn't run more than a kilometre in years. Now, I am under 90 kilograms, I have my first 10K run medal and am preparing for a half marathon. I've been forced to buy an entire new wardrobe to accommodate my shrinking belly and my idea of fun now includes an evening of furious spinning followed by a pump class.

I cannot voice how transformative this experience has been. Someone commented recently that the weight loss alone was 'life-changing', and I am inclined to agree. This is not simply a matter of health, although I am certainly more medically comfortable now, but a change of self. I am more confident, be that socially or professionally. I am more resilient, willing to push myself harder in all walks of life. I am genuinely happier in my own skin, although I admit to having never been truly unhappy. But most importantly, I find myself acting, sounding and thinking like an earlier version of myself, a more optimistic, hopeful (and dare I say younger!) version which I thought was far behind me. I'm loving being this person again, and I can't give a more thorough recommendation than that. And I'm nowhere close to finished yet!

Upwood Cricket Club Report - March 2017

By Neil Tuffin

Quiz Night

The Upwood Cricket Club annual family quiz night will be held on Saturday 8th April starting at 5:30 pm at Bury Village Hall. The cost will be £2 per person with a maximum of 8 people (inc children) per team. Please bring your own drink and nibbles. Questions (both adult and children) will be written and delivered by legendary local quiz master Pat Tuffin. Reserving a table is recommended but you can turn up on the night - available on a first come first served basis. For more information email Catherine at: cayjay@talk21.com.

Adult Cricket

We are running two adult teams this year. The first team compete in the Hunts League Division III on Saturdays and the seconds play in Hunts League Division V on Sundays. There are also a few friendly games including some evening games planned.

Home games are played at the picturesque ground on Huntingdon Road as you go through the village. When the weather is nice we often get lots of young families up at the ground with the children enjoying the sunshine, the fresh air and occasional ice creams with the mums socialising, clapping the dads on and sipping the occasional glass of wine. We also have some talented under 25's playing for us and through our continued drive to improve facilities we hope to encourage a few more to come and play for Upwood.

We are always looking for people to play, experienced or otherwise, and are very happy to accommodate those who can only play once in a while. Adult membership for the year is just £35.

Junior Cricket

Following on from our successful winter indoor coaching sessions, junior training will move outside after Easter. We are continuing with Monday evenings for boys and girls as we have done for the last few years.

We have also signed up to the new ECB All Stars initiative for 5-8 year olds (more info' in the May addition). All coaching is carried out by security checked and ECB qualified coaches. Sessions are always fun and we have a good ratio of coaches to children, ensuring that each child can get some individual advice and guidance on how to improve their game.

We aim to start on Monday, 24th April provided weather and ground conditions are suitable. Times are as follows:

- Novices (including All Stars Squad) 5-30 PM to 6-15 PM
- Development Squad (more experienced Under 10s) 5-30 PM to 6-30 PM
- Senior Squad (School Year Group 6 to 10) 6-30PM to 7-30PM

Junior membership is just £15 per child for the whole summer plus £2 a game. (There will also be an additional cost by the ECB for those wanting to join the All Stars Scheme but this is optional). Games are guaranteed for those aged 7 years old and upwards.

Donations

We have been lucky enough to receive a donation from Mr and Mrs N Purllant who have recently moved out of Providence Place on the Huntingdon Road near the ground.

This large sum of money has allowed us to replace the sightscreen which after many years of service has finally succumbed to the weather. This will be with us sometime in March or early April. As well as this generous donation Parallel UK (based in Spalding) have again sponsored the club with a substantial sum of money to purchase the latest covers which should ensure that more games are played. The club are very grateful for these exceedingly helpful donations and hopefully there will be some more information and pictures in the May addition.

All Stars squad

Fixtures

Why not come and have a look at what we do, enjoy some cricket and refreshments by visiting us at the following home games:

- Sunday 16th April 1-30pm Friendly vs Peterborough CAMRA
- Saturday 29th April 1-30pm 1st XI vs Hampton CC 2nd XI
- Saturday 6th May 1-30 pm 1st XI vs Ramsey 3rd XI

Under 11 squad

RAMSEY REPRESENTED AT CAMBRIDGE HALF MARATHON

Ten Ramsey Road Runners were amongst the 7,000 who took part in the Cambridge Half Marathon on March 5th in wet and windy conditions.

The race started from Midsummer Common and took the runners through the sights of Cambridge and out to Grantchester before finishing back on the common.

First home for Ramsey was Andrew Brett in 1 hour 22 minutes and 44 seconds, finishing 149th overall. He was followed by the 2016 Ladies Club Champion Lisa Marriott in 1:26:40 and 2016 Runners Runner Neil Hewson who recorded a massive personal best, finishing in 1:28:25. Neil said: "I was following the 1 hour 30 minute pacer but was feeling good so moved past. I wasn't sure if I would be able to hang on as my previous personal best was 5 minutes slower. I am delighted and it was great to see so many other good results for Ramsey." Many of the Ramsey team including Natalie Selby, Claire Hewson, Sian White and Martin Kirk were using it for marathon preparation, as they will be taking on the 26.2 mile distance in the spring.

The full results for Ramsey at the Cambridge Half are:

149th - Andrew Brett 1:22:44
281st - Lisa Marriott 1:26:40
378th - Neil Hewson 1:28:25
1241st - Natalie Selby 1:38:57
1626th - Raymond Woodruff 1:43:11
2492nd - Steve Lawson 1:48:52
2560th - Claire Hewson 1:49:27
3389th - Sian White 1:55:18
3605th - Martin Kirk 1:57:43
4677th - Martha King 2:06:56

Lisa Marriott at the finish of the Cambridge Half Marathon

Popular long-time volunteer Henry Bailey receiving a copy of the "Henry's Hill" sign from Paul Sinton-Hewitt. Also in the photo is Event Director Suzie Hall (left) and Run Director Alison Ainsworth (centre)

Adam and Paul Sinton-Hewitt – As always, photos are best taken before a run!

It's a chat, not an interview!

In the last edition, Adam Roberts got to grips with Parkrun, the UK founded phenomena that is spreading across the world. This month, he spoke to Parkrun founder and director Paul Sinton-Hewitt, who visited our local Parkrun in Huntingdon. They spoke after the run, which is decidedly not a race.

Adam Roberts (AR) : First off, how was your run today?

Paul Sinton-Hewitt (PAUL): Its been absolutely brilliant. It's a lovely course, kind of flat, but you have to work pretty hard I think, so I feel as if I've worked out!

AR: There is a huge turnout today, with a lot of people coming to see you!

PAUL: I think what it does is represents how good the events are. It represents what a great job the volunteers are doing and the community itself. I've always said, runners make the best people, and that's just been evidenced that is what happened today.

AR: Lets talk about the founding, which I think happened in Bushy Park?

PAUL: Yes, with just 14 runners!

AR: …and you have over three million running now?

PAUL: three million registered, yes, we have at least quarter of a million people actually running every Saturday morning.

AR: how does it feel to take it from that small seed and see it grow into a national organisation?

PAUL: It feels unbelievable, to be honest. It didn't start out that way! I started parkrun because I wanted to see my friends every week; I really wanted the social side of it. The running was the plumbing, the means by which I could get them together, and its turned out that actually that is the best thing about parkrun: we all go for a run but we also build these social connections, and we have coffee, and it's just the most fun thing you can do on a Saturday morning.

AR: Its an incredibly welcoming environment, and I'm constantly told it's a Run, not a Race. Can you explain that philosophy?

PAUL: It's the idea that everybody could and should be able to do it, so you'll see that we don't wear numbers, the registration is very simple, we invite everybody from Olympians through to four year olds, we encourage people with impairments, and we try and have this environment where everybody gets the chance. Everybody is able - if you can walk, you can probably do a parkrun! So, the race element we just wanted to remove that completely from it. We do give you a time, so you get to see how you are doing, and we have a few other things like age grading, which also evens it out over the years as you get older, but altogether the whole concept is that the exercise bit really shouldn't be the part that's the most difficult, that should be the easiest part really. You're just getting out, having some fun, and you don't even notice it - you just get fit

AR: So, if its socially minded, why running? Why not table tennis, or if you just want to get together why not go down the pub?

PAUL: To be honest, many many sports could adopt the same simple, easy philosophy that we have, but with running, there isn't almost anybody in the world who can't run. If you can walk you can run. There are obviously people with impairments for whom it is a complex situation, but for the most of us there is no skill involved. It's not like table tennis, where you either can or you can't, if you can walk, you can participate, and that means you can be part of the community.

AR: A couple of final questions. Firstly, if someone wants to parkrun but is perhaps a little nervous about going, what advice would you give them?

PAUL: Just get involved! You don't even have to sign up, so if you're even remotely nervous about it, just come along, have a look, perhaps speak to a volunteer, if you think that you are going to be too slow try going out with the event, walk with a tail runner and just see - you'll never be last.

AR: Lastly, what's coming up for you and for Parkrun?

PAUL: Well for parkrun, our mission is to make the world a healthier and happier place, and that means providing more of these events throughout the world, but also starting to look at those communities that desperately need us; communities that are under the radar who are perhaps not associated with exercise or healthy lifestyles or are part of underprivileged neighbourhoods. So in the UK that certainly something we are going to do. As for the rest of the world, I think we still have to grow, we just have to create more and more events. For me, I want to get out and see as many of the Parkruns as I possibly can, I want to represent what is healthy and well-being and all those sorts of things, so I'll be talking to whoever wants to listen about that.

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STEVE SHINES IN THE EMERALD ISLE

Steve Lovell celebrates winning the Planet Hastings Crazy Golf Open, the longest running club event in the country. (picture credit: Will Donnelly)

Ramsey minigolfer Steve Lovell's fantastic start to the 2017 season continued with first tour win and a runners up spot. In one of the craziest finishes to a tournament ever, Steve lost a playoff at the fifth extra hole in the English Open at Nottingham to Sean Homer of Greenhithe, Kent. However, the tables were turned the following week as Lovell secured a four shot victory over the same opponent in the Planet Hastings Crazy Golf Open.

Steve was understandably delighted. "I can't quite believe it, just an incredible seven days. Losing the English Open while leading on the last was hard to take and caused me a sleepless night or two. It was great to finally get across the line so soon after, I have never putted as well as I did during the last round in Hastings, I was utterly dominant". With these results, Lovell has become the new British number one. "I'm not sure that will ever sink in. I only started out doing this for fun and now I'm ranked number one. That's mad", he went on to say.

British Masters

Steve will look to build on his success by playing in the British Masters in his former home town of Worthing next month.

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